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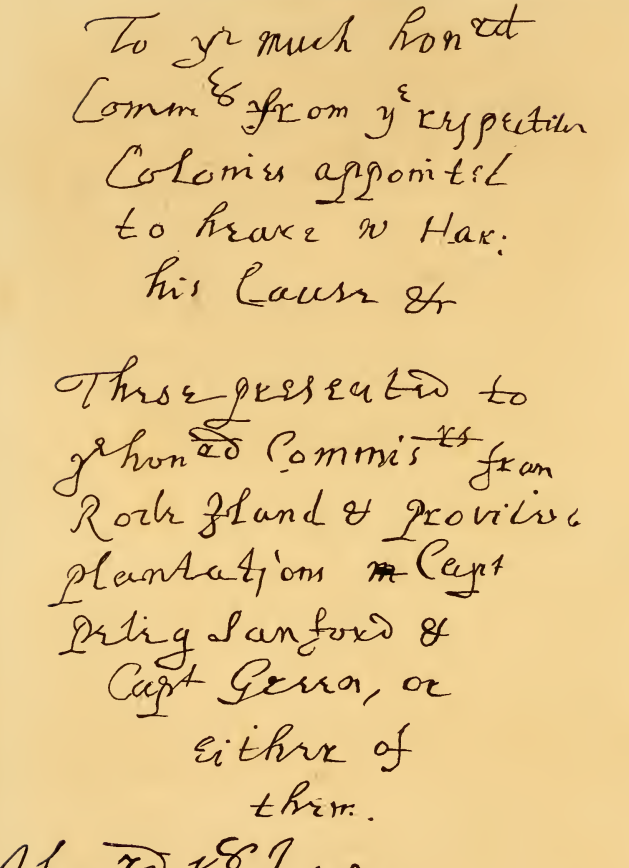
MEMOIR

OF

ROGER WILLIAMS.

FAC SIMILE OF THE HANDWRITING
OF ROGER WILLIAMS,
Copied from a Document written in 1677.


To yr much hon^rd
Comm^rs from y^e respective
Colonies appointed
to treate w Hak:
his Causs &c

These presented to
y^r hon^rd Commis^rs from
Rode Island & Providence
Plantations in Capt
Wm Sanford &
Capt Gerrar, or
either of
them.

Hon^rd & S^rs Jan
Yr most unworthy Servt
Roger Williams

MEMOIR

OF

ROGER WILLIAMS,

THE

FOUNDER OF THE STATE

OF

RHODE-ISLAND.

BY JAMES D. KNOWLES,

PROFESSOR OF PASTORAL DUTIES IN THE NEWTON THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION.

"Roger Williams justly claims the honor of having been the first legislator in the world, in its latter ages, that fully and effectually provided for and established a full, free and absolute liberty of conscience." GOVERNOR HOPKINS.

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1834.

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TO THE

Citizens of Rhode-Island,

THIS VOLUME

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED BY

THE AUTHOR.

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REC. APR 1881
THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY.

PREFACE.

The citizens of the United States have sometimes been ridiculed, for an alleged propensity to please their imaginations with romantic visions concerning the future glory of their country. They boast, it is said, not of what the nation has been, nor of what it is, but of what it will be. The American faculty, it is affirmed, is anticipation, not memory.

If the truth of this charge were admitted, it might be replied, that the 'proper motion' of the youthful imagination—in states as well as in individuals—is towards the future. It springs forward, with buoyant wing, forgetting the past, and disregarding the present, in the eagerness of its desire to reach fairer scenes. It is the instinct of our nature, the irrepressible longing of the immortal soul for something higher and better. It is never extinguished, though frequent disappointments abate its ardor, and long experience confirms the testimony of revelation, that perfect happiness is sought in vain on earth. In mature age, therefore, reason has corrected the errors of the imagination, and the old man looks backward to his early years, as the happiest period of his life, and praises the men and

the scenes of his youthful days, as far surpassing those which he now sees around him.*

Most nations are impelled, by the same principle, to recur to some past epoch in their history, as the period of their greatest glory. There is little in the prospect of the future to excite their hopes. The adherents to old institutions dread the progress of that spirit of innovation, which has already overthrown many of them, and which threatens speedy ruin to the rest. And the patriot, who is striving to raise his country to the enjoyment of liberty and happiness, foresees too many obstacles, too much fierce strife, suffering and bloodshed, to permit him to contemplate the future without anxiety.

It is the happiness of America, that almost every thing in her condition invites her to look forward with hope. Her perfect freedom,† her rapid progress, the elastic energy of her national character, the boundless extent of her territory, her situation, far from the contentions of European nations, and safe from the dangers both of their friendship and of their hostility, all awaken and justify the confident hope, that she is destined to reach a height of prosperity and power, which no other nation, of ancient or modern times, has attained.

But if Americans were so prone to look forward, that they forgot the past, it would certainly be a fault, which would deserve rebuke. Bright as the future may be, the past can present scenes, on which the American may gaze with pleasure, and from which he should draw lessons of wisdom and incitements to patriotism. Passing by the prosperous course of our history, since the adoption of the

---

* "Laudator temporis acti,
Se puero, castigator censorque minorum."
Horace de Arte Poet. l. 173–4.

† It is mortifying and painful, that truth compels us to except any persons among us from this remark.

Constitution; not pausing to contemplate the formation of that Constitution, though it was one of the most glorious achievements of wisdom and national virtue; looking beyond the unparalleled revolution itself; the character and actions of the men who laid the foundations of this country deserve the careful study, and must attract the admiration, of every true-hearted American. The motives, the policy, the personal qualities of the founders; their fervent piety, their courage and patience, their unwavering constancy, their calm wisdom, their love of learning, and their thirst for liberty, entitle those venerable men to the affection and gratitude of every succeeding generation. Their faults we may now see more clearly than their contemporaries; but those faults were, for the most part, the excesses of their virtues, the errors of wise heads and pure hearts, whose piety sometimes became austere, and whose conscientious love of truth occasionally betrayed them into intolerance. There is no stain upon their personal character; and the American may point, with grateful pleasure, to the bright names of Winslow, Winthrop, Hooker, Penn, Baltimore, Oglethorpe, and their associates, as among the choicest treasures of his country.

Among these names, that sense of justice, which eventually triumphs over temporary prejudice and wrong, has already placed that of Roger Williams. Long misunderstood and misrepresented, he was excluded from his appropriate place among the chief founders and benefactors of New-England. The early historians, Morton, Mather, Hubbard, and even Winthrop, spoke harshly of his character. His principles, both political and religious, were offensive to the first generations; and it is not strange, that he was viewed and treated as a fanatical heresiarch in religion, and a factious disturber of the state.

Later writers have treated his memory with more respect; and we might quote many honorable testimonies to

his principles and his character. But no extended memoir of his life has ever before been published. It would not be difficult to assign reasons for this neglect. The want of materials, and the contradictory accounts of various writers, were sufficient to deter his friends from the undertaking, and a lingering prejudice against him prevented others. The attention of some able writers has, nevertheless, been drawn to the subject. Dr. Belknap designed to give to the life of Roger Williams a place in his American Biography, and he made application to several persons in Rhode-Island for materials, but without success. It was announced, a few years since, that Robert Southey, Esq. intended to write the life of Mr. Williams. He probably relinquished the plan, for the same reason. The Rev. Mr. Greenwood, of Boston, formed the design of preparing a memoir, at the suggestion, I believe, of Mr. Southey. Mr. Greenwood collected many valuable materials, but the failure of his health, and other causes, induced him to abandon the undertaking.*

My attention was directed to the subject, in 1829, by hearing the Rev. Dr. Sharp, of Boston, pronounce, with his usual eloquence and true love of freedom, a eulogium on the character of Roger Williams. I soon afterwards suggested to him, that the life of Mr. Williams ought to be better known. He urged me to undertake the office of biographer, and many other friends concurred in the request. I consented, having learned that Mr. Greenwood had resolved to relinquish the design. I made an appli-

* Mr. Savage, in his edition of Winthrop, (vol. i. p. 42) excited, by the following note, a hope, which was unhappily disappointed: "Deficiency in all former accounts of this great, *earliest* asserter of religious freedom, will, we may hope, soon be supplied by a gentleman, whose elegance and perspicuity of style are already known. Several quires of original letters of Williams' have been seen by me, transcribed by or for the Rev. Mr. Greenwood, of this city."

cation to him, however, to be informed of his real purposes. With the most generous politeness, he placed at my disposal all the materials which he had collected. Among them were between twenty and thirty unpublished letters, copied from the originals, which were kindly lent to him by the Hon. Thomas L. Winthrop. These letters form a valuable part of this volume.

In my further search for information, I soon discovered, that many persons, well acquainted with our early history, knew very little of Roger Williams. In the books, I found almost every important fact, concerning him, stated differently. I was obliged to gather hints from disconnected documents, and to reconcile contradictory assertions; and in fine, my labor often resembled that of the miner, who sifts large masses of sand, to obtain a few particles of gold. I have spared neither toil nor expense to obtain materials. I have endeavored to make the book as complete and accurate as possible. It has cost me much time, and a degree of labor, which no one can estimate, who has not been engaged in similar investigations.

I have, however, received much aid from several individuals. Besides Mr. Greenwood, my thanks are especially due to the venerable Nestor of Providence, Moses Brown, and to John Howland, Esq. Other gentlemen are entitled to my gratitude, whom it would give me pleasure to name. I have, too, derived great assistance from several books. Among these I ought to mention Mr. Backus' History, from which I have copied a number of valuable documents, and gathered important information. Mr. Savage's admirable edition of Winthrop's Journal has been my chief guide, in narrating the early events of Mr. Williams' history, after his arrival in this country. From the valuable Annals of Dr. Holmes, and from the Library and the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, I have derived important aid.

I have strongly felt the want of a history of Rhode-Island. I have been obliged to relate many historical facts, which I have collected, in various ways, at the hazard of mistake and deficiency. It has been somewhat mortifying to me, as a native of Rhode-Island, to be obliged to rely on the writers of Massachusetts and Plymouth, for facts concerning the history of Rhode-Island, which could not, otherwise, be ascertained. While all the other New-England States, and indeed most of the States of the Union, have histories, it is hoped that Rhode-Island will not much longer be content to bear the reproach, of being indebted to other States for her knowledge of her own history. I am glad to learn, that the papers of the late Theodore Foster, Esq. are now in the possession of the Rhode-Island Historical Society. I hope that the Society will immediately appoint some competent person to prepare a history of the State. The Legislature ought to aid in procuring the requisite documents from England, and in defraying other necessary expenses. The State has no reason to be ashamed of her history. She owes it to herself to record it truly.

The want of such a history has induced me to insert in this volume several documents which cannot readily be found. I am not aware of any Rhode-Island publication, except a file of newspapers, in which a copy of the first charter is contained. The second charter is not easily to be procured. Very few, probably, of the citizens possess a copy.

It may, indeed, be objected to this book, that it is encumbered with documents. But I have desired to furnish the reader with the means of forming an acquaintance with Mr. Williams, by a perusal of his own letters, and other writings. These are never common-place. They are all marked with the impress of his character. The numerous authorities have been added, in order that if I

have committed mistakes, the reader might have the means of correcting them. It would be strange, if, amid so much contradiction and confusion, I have fallen into no errors. I can only say, that I have anxiously labored to learn the truth; and I shall be thankful for any suggestions, which may tend to make the book more accurate and useful.

A few of the notes are marked "G." They were appended by Mr. Greenwood to the documents which he loaned to me, and I have taken the liberty to copy them, as valuable illustrations.

Roger Williams lived in an eventful period, and a memoir of him must contain many references to contemporary personages and events. I have endeavored to speak of these with candor and kindness. The character and actions of the Pilgrim fathers have necessarily come under review. I have been obliged, occasionally, to censure; but it has been a source of pleasure, that the more I investigated their actions, the more deep and sincere was my veneration for those excellent men. It is due to them to point out those errors in their conduct, which they, were they now living, would lament and condemn.

The position in which this country is placed, as the great exemplar of civil and religious liberty, makes it inexpressibly important, that the true principles on which this liberty rests, should be thoroughly understood. A responsibility lies on the citizens of this country, which no other nation ever sustained. Here it is to be demonstrated, that man can govern himself, and that religion can walk abroad in her own dignity and unsullied loveliness, as the messenger of God, armed with his authority, and wielding his omnipotence; that she can speak to the hearts of men with a voice of power, which owes no part of its emphasis to the force of human laws; that she, instead of leaning on the arm of the magistrate for support, can enter the halls of legislation, the cabinets of rulers, and the courts

of justice, to spread out her laws, and proclaim her eternal sanctions. If civil liberty fail here, or if religion be overwhelmed with error or worldliness, the great cause of human happiness will suffer a disastrous check. It is believed, that a better knowledge of the principles of Roger Williams will have a salutary tendency, and that the publication of a memoir of his life is opportune, at this crisis, when, both in America and in Europe, the public mind is strongly agitated by questions which affect both the civil and the religious rights of men. If this book shall contribute, in the slightest degree, to the promotion of truth and freedom, I shall rejoice, and praise Him, who has restored my health, and given me leisure to finish the work.

A word or two of explanation, on certain points, may be necessary. In the quotations from old documents, I have altered the orthography conformably to present usage. One reason for this course was, that scarcely any writer was consistent with himself, especially in relation to proper names. There is, too, nothing in orthography to mark the style of a particular writer, and it may, consequently, be altered, without affecting the idiomatic peculiarities of his composition, while the book is freed from the uncouth forms of words spelled according to antiquated fashions.

The Indian names have been reduced to a uniform orthography, agreeably to what was believed to be the best form. They are spelled, in a most perplexing variety of ways, by different authors. Roger Williams himself sometimes spelled the same name differently in the same document.

I have endeavored to arrange the dates according to the old style. Many mistakes have been committed, by various authors, from a neglect of this point. Before 1752, the year was computed to commence on the 25th of March,

which was, accordingly, reckoned as the first month, and January and February were the eleventh and twelfth. Dates between the 1st of January and the 25th of March, are usually, in this book, marked with both years. Thus the time of Mr. Williams' arrival in America was the 5th of February, 1630–1.

No portrait of Roger Williams, it is believed, is in existence. As the best substitute, a fac-simile of his hand writing has been engraved, and prefixed to this volume. It was copied from a document, kindly furnished by Moses Brown.

Ill health, and various other causes, have delayed the work. Further search might, perhaps, detect additional materials; but my official duties, and other reasons, forbid a longer delay. It is now respectfully commended to the favor of the public; and above all, to the blessing of Him, without whose smile human approbation would be vain. I cannot, and, indeed, ought not to, be without some solicitude respecting the reception of a work, on which I have expended so much time and labor, cheered by the hope, that it would serve the cause of human happiness. I am well aware, that it is defective in several points; but it has not been in my power to make it more complete. I can easily anticipate objections, which will arise in some minds. One of these, it is probable, will be, that I have spoken too freely of the faults of Christians and ministers; that I have unveiled scenes of intolerance and persecution, which the enemies of religion may view with malicious joy. But my reply is, that I have not alluded to such topics, except where my main theme compelled me to speak of them. I trust, that what I have said is true, and uttered in a respectful and kind spirit. We must not, in order to promote or defend religion, attempt to conceal events which history has already recorded, and much less to palliate conduct, which we cannot justify. Let us, rather, con-

fess, with frankness and humility, our own faults, and those of our fathers; learn wisdom from past errors; and bring ourselves and others, as speedily as possible, to the adoption of those pure principles, by which alone Christianity can be sustained and diffused. The book of God records, among its salutary lessons, the mistakes and sins of good men. I have believed, that the wrong and mischievous tendency of intolerance could not be more forcibly exhibited, than in the conduct of our fathers. All men concede to them sincere piety, pure lives and conscientious uprightness of purpose. How pernicious, then, must be a principle, which could so bias the minds of such men, as to impel them to oppress, banish or put to death their fellow Christians! How dangerous the principle, if, in such hands, its operation was so terrible! We need not wonder that, under the direction of bigotry, ambition, cupidity and despotism, it produced the horrors of St. Bartholomew's, and the atrocities of Smithfield. The experience of New-England has proved, that the best men cannot be trusted with power over the conscience; and that this power must be wrested from the hands of all men, and committed to Him who alone is competent to wield it. This volume is dedicated to the defence of religious liberty, both by an exposition of the principles of Roger Williams, and by a display of the evils of intolerance. If it shall thus aid in hastening the universal triumph of pure and undefiled religion, my strongest desire will be accomplished.

Newton, December 12, 1833.

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MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

Early life of Mr. Williams—State of religious affairs in England—Mr. Williams embarks for America.

The obvious analogy between human life and a river has supplied the poet with similes, and the moralist with arguments. The resemblance of the two objects is, in this point, at least, worthy of notice, that their origin awakens the curiosity of every reflective mind. This feeling has impelled many travellers to a perilous search for the sources of the Niger and the Nile; and it made Lewis and his associates look, with triumphant joy, on the little rill, at the summit of the Rocky Mountains, which flows on, and expands into the mighty Missouri.

We feel a similar desire, when we survey the actions of a distinguished individual, to learn the incidents of his youth. The mind is perplexed and dissatisfied, if such a personage has suddenly appeared, like Manco Capac to the Peruvians, as if he had indeed alighted on the earth from the sun, or risen, like the fabled Venus, from the ocean.

This curiosity has valuable uses. The instruction which is gathered from the lives of men is drawn, in great part, from a view of the steps, by which they ad-

vanced to their subsequent elevation in virtue and usefulness, or to a bad eminence in crime. The character of most men is formed early, and we can scarcely pronounce a fair judgment respecting any individual, unless we take into the account the circumstances, which shed a propitious or malignant influence on those early years, when his habits were fixed, and his principles imbibed.

It is a subject of regret, that of the early life of Roger Williams so little is known. A few facts only have been preserved, and these do not rest on very certain evidence. It is remarkable, that in his numerous writings, there are no allusions to his parents, to the place of his birth and education, and to other points relating to his early years. There are, in his letters and books, but two or three incidental references to events anterior to his arrival in this country; though his allusions to early occurrences after his emigration are very frequent.

He was about 32 years of age when he reached our shores; a period of life, when the energy of youth remains without its rashness, and the mind has acquired steadiness, without the timid caution and fixed pertinacity of old age. It is a period, however, when the character of most men is already formed. Though new situations and difficult exigencies may develope unexpected powers, and give prominence to certain traits of character, yet the mind commonly remains unchanged in its essential qualities. It was long since said by Horace, that those who cross the ocean pass under a new sky, but do not acquire a new disposition.* This was probably true of Mr. Williams; and if we could trace his early history, we should undoubtedly see an exhibition of the same principles and temper which distinguished his subsequent career.

It may, however, be said of most of the prominent men among the first settlers of New England, that their history begins at the period of their arrival here. Our accounts of their early lives are very brief. They were too busy to record their own early fortunes, and too pious to feel any pride in displaying their descent, their virtues, or their sufferings. The present and the future filled their minds;

* "Cœlum non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt."
Ep. lib. i. 11.

and they seem to have felt, that the wide ocean which separated them from the land of their fathers had effected a similar disjunction of their history. Of Roger Williams less is known than of some others, because no efforts were made by early biographers to collect facts concerning him. His opponents were more disposed to obliterate his name, than to record his life. His contemporary friends were sharers in his sufferings, and were not at leisure to relate his story or their own. Even the records of the church which he founded at Providence contain no notice of him, written earlier than 1775, when the Rev. John Stanford, a venerable minister, still living in New-York, collected the fugitive traditions concerning the origin of the church.

These traditions state that Mr. Williams was born in Wales, in 1599.* The place of his birth, and the character of his parents, are not known. We may easily believe that he was a native of Wales. He possessed the Welch temperament—excitable and ardent feelings, generosity, courage, and firmness, which sometimes, perhaps, had a touch of obstinacy. It has been supposed, that he was a relative of Oliver Cromwell, one of whose ancestors was named Williams.† This conjecture has not a very solid basis. Roger Williams does not claim, in his writings, any kindred to the formidable Protector, though he repeatedly alludes to his intimacy with him, and once speaks of a "close conference with Oliver," on the subject of Popery, which they both abhorred and feared. It appears, from a remark in one of his books, that he became pious in early life. "The truth is, from my childhood, now above threescore years, the Father of lights and mercies touched my soul with a love to himself, to his only begotten, the true Lord Jesus, to his holy Scriptures," &c.‡

That his parents were in humble life, and that his dis-

* The records of the church say 1598, (Benedict, vol. i. p. 473) but this statement appears to be a mistake. Mr. Williams, in a letter dated July 21, 1679, (Backus, vol. i. p. 421) said that he was then "near to fourscore years of age." This proves that he was not born in 1598, and makes it probable that the next year was the true time.

† Baylies' History of Plymouth, vol. i. p. 284. See Appendix to this work, (A.)

‡ George Fox digged out of his Burrowes, written in 1673.

position was pious and thoughtful, may be inferred from an incident which is related concerning him, and which, if true, had a great share in determining his future course. It is said, that the famous lawyer, Sir Edward Coke, observed him, one day, during public worship, taking notes of the discourse. His curiosity was excited, and he requested the boy to show him his notes. Sir Edward was so favorably impressed by the evidences of talent which these exhibited, that he requested the parents of young Williams to intrust their son to his care. He placed him, as the tradition runs, at the University of Oxford,* where he drank deeply at the fountains of learning. His writings testify, that his education was liberal, according to the taste of those times, when logic and the classics formed the chief objects of study at the universities.

He afterwards commenced the study of the law, at the desire and under the guidance of his generous patron, who would naturally wish to train his pupil to the honorable and useful profession which he himself adorned. The providence of God may be seen in thus leading the mind of Mr. Williams to that acquaintance with the principles of law and government, which qualified him for his duties as legislator of his little colony.

But he probably soon found that the study of the law was not congenial with his taste. Theology possessed more attractions to a mind and heart like his. To this divine science he directed his attention, and received Episcopal orders. It is stated, that he assumed, while in Eng-

* Wood, in his Athenæ Oxonienses, after giving an account of a gentleman named Roger Williams, says, "I find another Roger Williams, later than the former, an inhabitant of Providence, in New England, and author of (1) *A Key to the Language of New-England*, London, 1643, oct. (2) *The Hireling Ministry none of Christ's, or a Discourse of the Propagation of the Gospel of Christ Jesus*, London, 1652, qu. &c. But of what university the said Williams was, if of any, I know not, or whether a real fanatick or Jesuit." This assertion of Wood renders it doubtful whether Mr. Williams was educated at Oxford, or elsewhere. In the absence of all evidence, it might be thought more probable that he received his education at Cambridge, where a large proportion of the leading Puritans were educated. Coke himself was a graduate of Cambridge, and would probably prefer to place Williams there. Inquiries have been sent to England, for information on this point, but they have not been successful.

land, the charge of a parish; that his preaching was highly esteemed, and his private character revered.*

We have thus recited the traditions which have been current in Rhode Island. There is undoubtedly some truth in them, though the story is a little romantic, and may have received some embellishment in its progress.

Roger Williams entered on public life at an eventful period, when the national mind was strongly agitated by those political and religious causes, which had been slowly operating for many years, and which soon subverted the throne and the Episcopal Church. At these causes we can do no more than glance.

The Reformation, in England, commenced as far back as the latter part of the fourteenth century, when Wickliffe taught the pure doctrines of the Scriptures, and kindled a great light for the guidance of the people in the path to Heaven, by translating the Scriptures, for the first time, into the English language. He was, of course, denounced and persecuted by the Catholic Church, but his doctrines spread, and though many of his followers were put to death, and the utmost cruelty was practised, in various ways, to hinder the progress of the truth, yet the principles of the Reformation were extensively diffused in England, before Luther and his fellow laborers commenced their glorious ministry. But no public blow was given to the papal power in England, till Henry VIII. finding the authority of the Pope an obstacle to his favorite project of repudiating his wife Catharine and marrying Anne Boleyn, renounced, in 1534, his political allegiance to his Holiness.† The King was created, by act of Par-

* Benedict, vol. i. p. 473–4.

† The refusal of the Pope, Clement VII. to sanction the divorce, would have been honorable to him, if it had not undeniably sprung from political motives. He at first prepared a bull, granting Henry's request, but in a short time he thought it more conducive to his political interests to suppress it, and in a fit of anger against the King for a supposed insult, the Pope issued his sentence, prohibiting the divorce, and threatening the King with excommunication if he did not recognise Catharine as his wife. In six days after, he received intelligence which made him earnestly desire to annul his sentence, but it was too late. His attribute of infallibility was now found inconvenient. He could not retract. Henry was exasperated and

liament, the Head of the Church, and the powers which had previously been claimed and exercised by the Pope, were transferred to the King. But, while the papal authority was rejected, the doctrines of Popery were not discarded. The King was a strenuous believer in transubstantiation, purgatory, sprinkling of holy water, invocation of saints, and other doctrines and rites of the Catholic Church. He exacted as implicit a submission to his will as the Pope himself. Indeed, little more was yet gained, than the substitution of a Pope in England for a Pope in Rome. Henry was of a temper too despotic to permit him to be a friend of the Protestant religion. To a monarch of arbitrary principles, the spirit of Popery is more congenial than that of the Protestant faith. The Catholic system requires an unconditional submission to the authority of man. The first principle of Protestantism is implicit obedience to God alone. The decisions of Councils and the commands of the Pope bind the Catholic; the will of God, as it is uttered in the Holy Scriptures, is the only rule of faith and practice to the true Protestant.

After the death of Henry, his son, Edward VI. ascended the throne. He was a religious Prince, and a zealous friend of the Reformation. The Church of England was purified from many corruptions during his reign, a liturgy was compiled, and the Protestant religion made a rapid progress in the nation. But some relics of Popery were still retained, and among others, the vestments of the clergy. It was deemed indispensable, that the priests should wear the square cap, the surplice, the cope, the tippet, and other articles of apparel, which were in use among the Popish clergy. Some excellent ministers refused to wear these garments, on the ground that they were associated in the public mind with Popery; were regarded by many of the people with superstitious reverence, and ought, consequently, to be rejected with the other corruptions from which the church had purged herself. It was, unquestionably, very unwise to retain an appendage

renounced his political allegiance, though, in his controversy with Luther, which won for him from the Pope the title of *Defender of the Faith*, he had argued that the primacy of the Pope was of divine right! Histoire du Concile de Trent, livre i. p. 65, Amsterdam edition, 1686.

of the old system, which tended to remind the people of the discarded religion, to irritate the minds of its enemies, while it nourished the attachment to it which some persons secretly retained, and to suggest the obvious conclusion, that as the ministers of the new religion resembled so nearly those of the old, the difference between the two systems was very small. The effect of wearing the popish garments was so manifestly injurious to the progress of truth, that the refusal to wear them was not a trivial scruple of conscience, as it may, at first sight, appear. But the attempt to enforce the use of them, by severe penalties, and by expulsion from office, was unjust; and it led to a final separation of the Protestants themselves into Conformists and Non-Conformists.

After Edward's death, and the accession of Mary, Popery was restored, and scenes of barbarous cruelty and bloody persecution ensued, which have made the name of this Queen infamous. Many hundreds of the Protestants perished at the stake, or in prison, and multitudes fled to Germany, Switzerland, and other countries.

The reign of this fierce bigot was happily short, and Elizabeth succeeded her. The Protestant religion was re-established, and during her long reign it gained an ascendancy which it has never since lost. Yet Elizabeth possessed the despotic temper of her father. She had a fondness for some of the gaudy rites of Popery.* She peremptorily insisted on the use of the clerical vestments, and on a strict conformity to all the other ceremonies of the church. The final separation of the Non-Conformists from the Church of England was thus hastened. Those who had fled from England during the reign of Mary, returned, on the accession of Elizabeth, bringing with them an attachment to the purer rites of the Reformed Churches in Holland, Switzerland and France. Most of these exiles, and of the other Non-Conformists, were, nevertheless, willing to subscribe to the doctrines of the Church of England, and to use the liturgy, if they might be permitted to omit the vestments, the sign of the cross in baptism, and some other ceremonies. They disliked the pretensions of the Bishops, and many of them preferred the

* Elizabeth often said, that she hated the Puritans more than she did the Papists. Neal, vol. i. p. 319.

Presbyterian or Independent form of Church government. There were, too, some minor points in the liturgy, to which they objected. But had they been treated with Christian kindness, and allowed, in the spirit of mutual forbearance and charity, to neglect those forms, which they considered as sinful or inexpedient, they would, for the most part, have remained in the Episcopal Church, and England would have been spared the manifold crimes and miseries, which issued in a civil war, and drenched her soil with the blood of her King, and of thousands of her bravest sons.

But the principles of religious liberty were then unknown. The Queen, though for a while she treated the Non-Conformists with indulgence, till her power was fully established, soon announced to them her sovereign pleasure, that they should submit to all the ceremonies of the church. Severe laws were passed by an obsequious Parliament, and enforced, with ready zeal, by servile Bishops. Every minister who refused to conform to all the prescribed ceremonies was liable to be deprived of his office; and a large number of the ablest ministers in the nation were thus expelled and silenced.* In order to enforce the laws with the utmost rigor, a new tribunal was erected, called the

* Neal (vol. i. p. 236) gives the following specimen of the arbitrary manner in which the ministers were treated. It is an account of the examination of the London clergy: "When the ministers appeared in court, Mr. Thomas Cole, a clergyman, being placed by the side of the Commissioners, in priestly apparel, the Bishop's chancellor from the bench addressed them in these words: 'My masters, and ye ministers of London, the Council's pleasure is, that ye strictly keep the unity of apparel, like the man who stands here canonically habited with a square cap, a scholar's gown priest-like, a tippet, and in the church a linen surplice. Ye that will subscribe, write *volo;* those that will not subscribe, write *nolo*. Be brief, make no words." Some of these distressed ministers subscribed for the sake of their families, but thirty-seven absolutely refused. They were immediately suspended from office, and told, that unless they should conform in three months, they should be wholly deprived of their livings. In 1585 and 1586, it was found, by a survey, that there were only 2000 ministers, who were able to preach, to serve 10,000 churches. Bishop Sandys, in one of his sermons before the Queen, told her Majesty, that some of her subjects did not hear one sermon in seven years, and that their blood would be required of some one. Elizabeth thought three or four preachers in a county sufficient. Neal, vol. i. p. 359.

Court of High Commission, consisting of Commissioners, appointed by the Queen. This Court was invested with power to arrest ministers in any part of the kingdom, to deprive them of their livings, and to fine or imprison them at the pleasure of the Court. "Instead of producing witnesses in open court, to prove the charges, they assumed a power of administering an oath *ex officio*, whereby the prisoner was obliged to answer all questions the Court should put to him, though never so prejudicial to his own defence. If he refused to swear, he was imprisoned for contempt; and if he took the oath, he was convicted upon his own confession."* By this Protestant Inquisition, and by other means, one fourth of the preachers in England are said to have been under suspension. Numerous parishes were destitute of preachers, and so many were filled by illiterate and profligate men, that not one beneficed clergyman in six was capable of composing a sermon.† Thus were learned and pious ministers oppressed, merely for their conscientious scruples about a few ceremonies, their families were ruined, the people were deprived of faithful teachers, the progress of truth was hindered, the papists were gratified, and a state of irritation was produced in the public mind, which led, in a succeeding reign, to the disastrous issue of a bloody civil war.

Nor was the edge of this intolerance turned against the clergy alone. The people were rigorously required to attend regularly at the parish churches.

Measures like these gradually alienated the affections of many from the Established Church, and convinced them, that there was no prospect of obtaining toleration, or of effecting a further reform in the church. They accordingly separated from it, and established meetings, where the ceremonies were not practised. These Non-Conformists were called Puritans, a term of reproach derived from the Cathari, or Puritans, of the third century after Christ. The term, however, was not inappropriate, as it intimated their desire of a purer form of worship and discipline in the church. It was afterwards applied to them on account of the purity of their morals, and the Calvinistic cast of their doctrines.

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* Neal, vol. i. preface. † Neal, vol. i. preface.

This separation occurred in the year 1566. The storm of royal and ecclesiastical wrath now beat the more fiercely on the heads of the Puritans. The history of England, for the succeeding century, is a deplorable narrative of oppression, bloodshed and indescribable misery, inflicted on men and women, of deep piety and pure lives, but guilty of claiming the rights of conscience, and choosing to worship God with different forms from those which the National Church prescribed. No man, of right feelings, can read Neal's History of the Puritans, without sorrow and indignation. Every man ought to read it, if he would understand the reasons why the founders of this country left their native land, to seek an asylum in the wilderness, and if he would rightly estimate the great principles of religious liberty which Roger Williams maintained and defended.

The accession of James I. excited the hopes of the Puritans. He had been educated in the principles of the Reformation, and had stigmatized the service of the Church of England as "an evil said mass in English."* He had promised, that he would maintain the principles of the Church of Scotland while he lived. But he changed his principles or his policy, after he ascended the throne of England. He then announced the true royal creed, *No Bishops, no King*. He treated the Puritans with contempt and rigor, declaring that they were a sect "unable to be suffered in any well-governed commonwealth."† Many of the Puritans, finding their situation intolerable at home, left the kingdom for the continent, or turned their eyes to America for a refuge from persecution.

In the midst of these scenes, Roger Williams was born and educated. His character impelled him to the side of the Puritans. His political principles were then, it is probable, as they were throughout his subsequent life, very liberal; and were entirely repugnant to the doctrines which were then upheld by the court and the dignitaries of the church. James was an obstinate and arbitrary monarch, who inflexibly maintained, in theory and often in practice, those despotic principles, which led his son to the scaffold, and expelled James II. from the throne. A mind, like that of Williams, strong, searching and fearless, would

* Neal, vol. ii. p. 28. † Prince, p. 107.

naturally be opposed to the pretensions and policy of the King.* His patron, Sir Edward Coke, incurred the resentment of James, for his free principles, and his bold vindication of the rights of the people. Charles I. was, if possible, more arbitrary than his father, and more disposed to trample on the constitution, and on the rights of the people.

The tyranny exercised by the Bishops, the severe persecution of the Puritans, and the arrogant demand of absolute submission to the National Church, were still more offensive to a man like Mr. Williams. His principles, as he afterwards expounded them, by his life and in his writings, claimed for all men a perfect liberty of conscience, in reference to religion. Such principles, allied to a bold spirit, must have brought him into notice at such a crisis, and must have attracted upon his head the storm of persecution. Cotton, Hooker, and many other ministers, were silenced. In such times, Mr. Williams could not escape. If he was indeed admitted to a living, it must have been through the indulgence of some mild Prelate, or by the influence of some powerful patron. If Cotton and Hooker were not spared, Williams could not be suffered to preach, for his refusal to conform seems to have been more decided than theirs.†

The same motives, without doubt, which induced others to forsake their native land for America, operated on the mind of Mr. Williams. On the 1st of December, 1630, he embarked at Bristol, in the ship Lyon, Captain William Peirce. His wife accompanied him, a lady, of whose previous history we are more ignorant than of his own.‡

* Mr. Williams had some personal intercourse with the monarch, but of what kind does not appear. In his letter to Major Mason, he refers to "King James, whom I have spoke with."

† "Although the discusser acknowledgeth himself unworthy to speak for God to Master Cotton, or any, yet possibly Master Cotton may call to mind, that the discusser (riding with himself and one other, of precious memory, Master Hooker, to and from Sempringham) presented his arguments from Scripture, why he durst not join with them in their use of Common Prayer." Bloody Tenet made more Bloody, p. 12.

‡ Mr. William Harris, in a letter, speaks of a Mr. Warnard, as a brother of Mrs. Williams, apparently meaning the wife of Roger Williams. This is the only hint which the author has found, re-

There is, however, satisfactory evidence, in her subsequent life, of her virtues as a wife and a mother. We cannot doubt, that she was of a kindred spirit with her husband, whose fortunes, both adverse and prosperous, she shared for half a century.

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specting the family of Mrs. Williams. Her name, by some strange mistake, is stated, in the records of the church at Providence, to have been Elizabeth, instead of Mary, her real name. These records led Mr. Benedict, in his valuable History, (vol. i. p. 476) into the same error. On his authority, one of the descendants of Roger Williams, now living, named a child Elizabeth, in honor, as she meant it, of her venerable maternal ancestor.

CHAPTER II.

Historical Sketch—View of the condition of the country at the time of Mr. Williams' arrival.

The first settlement, by Europeans, in North America, was made in 1585, when Sir Walter Raleigh sent a fleet of seven ships from England to Virginia. One hundred and seven persons were landed on the island of Roanoke, near the mouth of Albemarle Sound, in the present State of North Carolina. But discouraged by the want of provisions, and probably by other causes, all the colonists returned to England the next year. Another, and more successful, attempt was made twenty years afterwards, under the authority of a patent from King James, who granted all the territory in North America, comprehended between the 34th and 45th degrees of latitude, to be equally divided between two companies, called, respectively, the London and the Plymouth.

In 1607, three ships, with one hundred emigrants, formed a settlement on the James River, in Virginia, and called the spot Jamestown, in honor of the King.

In the same year, a small colony made a settlement at the mouth of the Kennebec River, in the present State of Maine; but the loss of their stores by fire, and the severity of the winter, induced them all to abandon the undertaking the next year, and return to England.

In 1610, a settlement was commenced at Newfoundland, and in 1614, the Dutch built a fort on the island of Manhattan, where the city of New York now stands, and held the country many years, under a grant from the States' General, by the name of the New Netherlands.*

In 1620, the ever memorable landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth took place. The colonists were a company of Puritans, who left England so early as 1608, with their pastor, the Rev. John Robinson, and settled at Leyden, in Holland. The merciless oppression which they endured in England impelled them thus to abandon their native

* Holmes' Am. Annals, vol. i. p. 146.

land. They enjoyed protection and prosperity in Holland, but they were not satisfied with their condition and prospects in that country, which a foreign language and lax morals rendered an undesirable home for them and their children. They accordingly resolved to emigrate to America. They sailed from Plymouth (England) in September, 1620, and on the 11th of December they landed at the spot to which they gave the name of Plymouth.

The settlement of Massachusetts Bay occurred a few years after. This great enterprise was conducted under the direction of the Plymouth Company, who obtained a new patent from King James, by which a number of the highest nobility and gentry of England, their associates and successors, were constituted "the Council established at Plymouth, in the county of Devon, for the planting, ruling, ordering and governing of New England, in America." By this patent, the whole territory between the 40th and the 48th degrees of north latitude, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, was granted to the company.* In 1627–8, the Company sold to several gentlemen, among whom were John Endicott and John Humfrey, all that part of New-England which lies between three miles north of Merrimac River and three miles south of Charles River, across the whole breadth of the continent. In June, 1628, Mr. Endicott sailed from England, for Naumkeag, since called Salem, where a small company of emigrants had fixed their residence a short time before. Mr. Endicott's first letter from America is dated September 13, 1628, and his arrival is considered as the date of the first permanent settlement of Massachusetts Proper.

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*This extensive grant included a considerable part of the British colonies in North America, the whole of the New England States, and of New York; about half of Pennsylvania; two thirds of New Jersey and Ohio; a half of Indiana and Illinois; the whole of Michigan, Huron, and the whole of the territory of the United States westward of them, and on both sides of the Rocky Mountains; and from a point considerably within the Mexican dominions, on the Pacific Ocean, nearly up to Nootka Sound. This enormous grant shows how imperfectly the geography of the country was known, by James and his counsellors. The Council soon found their undertaking an unprofitable speculation, and surrendered their patent to the Crown. See Hon. E. Everett's Anniversary Address at Charlestown, June 28, 1830, pp. 13, 31.

The patent from the Council of Plymouth gave a good right to the soil, (says Hutchinson, vol. i. pp. 16, 17) but no powers of government. A royal charter was necessary. This passed the seals March 4, 1628–9. It confirmed the patent of the Council of Plymouth, and created the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay, in New-England, a body politic and corporate. By this charter, the Company were empowered to elect, annually, forever, out of the freemen of said Company, a Governor, a Deputy Governor, and eighteen assistants, and to make laws not repugnant to the laws of England.

As the state of things in the parent country daily became more distressing to the friends of religion and liberty, an emigration, unparalleled for its extent, and for the character of the emigrants, was projected. A considerable number of persons of great respectability, of good fortune, and of consideration in society, among whom were Winthrop, Dudley, Johnson, and Saltonstall, resolved to remove, with their families and property, to Massachusetts, on condition that the charter of the colony and the seat of its government should be transferred to America. This important proposition was acceded to, and on the 28th of April, 1630, Winthrop, who had been elected Governor, and his associates, sailed from Yarmouth,* in a fleet, which, with the vessels that preceded and followed them the same season, amounted in the whole to seventeen sail,† with above fifteen hundred passengers.‡ The Arbella, with Governor Winthrop on board, arrived at Salem on the 12th of June, and the other vessels arrived soon after. The colonists there had lost eighty of their number by death the winter previous. Their provisions were nearly consumed, and they were in a distressing situation. The arrival of the new emigrants occasioned great joy to the sufferers, and revived their hopes.

It was early determined that Salem was not the proper position for the capital. The Governor, and the principal part of the emigrants, left Salem soon after their arrival, and resided awhile at Charlestown. Here sickness pre-

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* Winthrop's Journal, vol. i. p. 5.
† Everett's Address, p. 27. ‡ Hutchinson, vol i. p. 24.

vailed among them, and a considerable number died.* They were distressed by the want of fresh water. Many of them accordingly abandoned Charlestown, and settled at Watertown and Dorchester, while a still larger number removed, in September, to the other side of the river, and laid the foundation of Boston. The peninsula was then inhabited by only one white man, the Rev. William Blackstone.† It was called by the Indians Shawmut, and by the neighboring settlers, Trimountain, the former name signifying the abundance and sweetness of its waters, the latter the peculiar character of its hills.‡ It was called Boston by a vote of the Court, September 7, in well deserved honor of the Rev. John Cotton, who had been a minister of Boston, in England, and whose arrival in America was earnestly expected.

The sufferings of the first inhabitants of the metropolis were very great. Sickness swept many of them into the grave. The weather during the winter was extremely severe, and provisions were so scarce, that the inhabitants were in imminent peril of starvation.§ At this critical

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* It is stated, that not less than two hundred persons died, from the time the company sailed from England, in April, up to the December following. Everett's Address, p. 50.

† This gentleman came from England. He claimed the whole peninsula of Boston, because he was the first white man who slept there. He hospitably invited Gov. Winthrop and his friends to remove thither, on account of a fine spring of water there. He soon left Boston, alleging that he left England because he did not like the Lords Bishops, but he could not join with the colonists, because he did not like the Lords Brethren. His rights as the first occupant were acknowledged, and thirty pounds were paid to him in 1634. He removed to a spot in the present town of Cumberland, (R. I.) about six miles from Providence, and the river which flows near now bears his name. He lived to an old age, and occasionally preached at Providence and other places. Tradition says, that he sometimes secured the attention of his hearers by a skilful distribution of apples. His orchard flourished long after his death, and some of the trees are, it is said, yet standing.

‡ President Quincy's His. Dis. Sept. 17, 1830, p. 19.

§ It may be profitable to the men of this generation to read the following account, given by Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 27.

"The weather held tolerable until the 24th of December, but the cold then came on with violence. Such a Christmas eve they had never seen before. From that time to the 10th of February their chief care was to keep themselves warm, and as comfortable, in

juncture, the ship Lyon, in which Roger Williams had embarked, arrived, on the 5th of February, 1630–1. Governor Winthrop (vol. i. pp. 41, 42) thus records the arrival of this vessel:

"Feb. 5. The ship Lyon,* Mr. William Peirce, master, arrived at Nantasket. She brought Mr. Williams, a godly minister,† with his wife, Mr. Throgmorton, Perkins, Ong, and others, with their wives and children, about twenty passengers, and about two hundred tons of goods. She set sail from Bristol, December 1. She had a very tempestuous passage, yet through God's mercy, all her people came safe, except Way his son, who fell from the spritsail yard in a tempest, and could not be recovered, though he kept in sight near a quarter of an hour; her goods also came all in good condition."

The strong contrast between the situation of the present inhabitants of the metropolis, and that of the little company of suffering exiles in 1630, forces itself on our minds. They were few in number. They had no suitable dwell-

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other respects, as their scant provisions would permit. The poorer sort were much exposed, lying in tents and miserable hovels, and many died of the scurvy and other distempers. They were so short of provisions, that many were obliged to live upon clams, muscles, and other shell fish, with ground nuts and acorns instead of bread. One that came to the Governor's house, to complain of his sufferings, was prevented, being informed that even there the last batch was in the oven. Some instances are mentioned of great calmness and resignation in this distress. A man who had asked his neighbor to a dish of clams, after dinner returned thanks to God, who had given them to suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sands. They had appointed the 22d of February for a fast; but on the 5th, to their great joy, the ship Lyon, Capt. Peirce, one of the last year's fleet, returned, laden with provisions, from England, which were distributed according to the necessities of the people. They turned their fast into a thanksgiving."

*This was a regular colony ship. Her arrival from England, with emigrants, supplies, &c. is often noted in the Journal. The following November, on the 2d, she arrived with the Governor's wife, the famous John Elliot, and others. But, unfortunately, she was cast away on the 2d of November, 1633, upon a shoal off the coast of Virginia. G.

† In the first edition this was printed "*man.*" Mr. Savage, in a note, says: "In the original MS. this word has been tampered with, perhaps by some zealot, yet it appears clearly enough to be Winthrop's usual abbreviation for that which is restored in the text, and Prince read it as I do."

ings to shelter them from the rigors of winter, then more severe, perhaps, than any which we now experience. They were almost without food. Disease was among them, and several of their number sunk into the grave, whose lives might doubtless have been preserved, had they been furnished with suitable shelter, food and medicine. When they looked around them, all was dreary and melancholy. "Where now exists a dense and aggregated mass of living beings and material things, amid all the accommodations of life, the splendors of wealth, the delights of taste, and whatever can gratify the cultivated intellect, there were then only a few hills, which, when the ocean receded, were intersected by wide marshes, and when its tide returned, appeared a group of lofty islands, abruptly rising from the surrounding waters. Thick forests concealed the neighboring hills, and the deep silence of nature was broken only by the voice of the wild beast or the bird, and the war whoop of the savage."*

How different the situation of the present inhabitants. That little company has swelled to more than sixty thousand. Those forests, which then covered the hills and vallies, are gone; the ocean has been driven back from much of the space over which it then rolled; and now, where stood the few tents and cabins of the first settlers, have sprung up, over the whole peninsula, sumptuous structures and spacious temples, comfortable dwellings, ample warehouses, and every thing which can minister to the happiness of men. The poorest of its citizens is better sheltered and better fed, than some of the richest families among the first inhabitants. Let them give devout thanks to God, that He has reserved for them a happier lot than that of their fathers. Let them, amid their profusion of blessings, praise the Lord, who has done so great things for their city, and its successive generations. Let them, above all, hold fast those great truths, for which the founders sacrificed every thing dear to them on earth.

As the colonists came to this country to enjoy the privilege of worshipping God according to their conceptions of His will, it was, of course, among their first objects to form churches, and make provision for the regular worship of the Most High.

* Quincy's Hist. Dis. 1830, p. 20.

The settlers at Plymouth were organized as a church before they left Holland, and as such they landed on our shores. This church was formed on the principle of entire independence on all human authority. Its members belonged to that class of the Non-Conformists, who had separated entirely from the Church of England, and adopted a form of church polity which they deemed more consistent with the letter and the spirit of the New Testament.

The separate independence of each church on all others; the necessity of true piety as a qualification for membership; the right of each church to elect its own officers; the rejection of all officers except pastors or elders, and deacons, and the entire equality of all pastors and elders, in respect to power and privileges, were among the principles adopted by this excellent body of Christians. They are the principles which the Scriptures teach, and it would have been happy for the cause of truth, if they had been held fast, without any corrupt mixture, by all the churches which professed to receive them. Another principle adopted by the church of Plymouth was, that ecclesiastical censures are wholly spiritual, and not to be accompanied with temporal penalties. In this respect, the church of Plymouth were in advance of their brethren in Massachusetts, and the history of the Plymouth colony is honorably distinguished by a tolerant spirit, which contributed not less to her peace and prosperity, than to her true fame.

The first settlers at Salem, Boston, and other towns in Massachusetts Bay, belonged, for the most part, to the other class of Non-Conformists, who did not, while in England, separate wholly from the Established Church, though they opposed her corruptions. They desired only a further reform of the Church herself, and retained their membership, some of them conforming, though reluctantly, to her ceremonies, to avoid persecution, and others refusing such a conformity, protected awhile by the indulgence of some mild Prelates, or by the friendship of powerful laymen. When, at length, despairing of the desired reform, and weary of persecution, they embarked for America, they came as members of the Church of England. Winthrop and his associates, while on board the fleet at Yarmouth, addressed a farewell letter to the "rest of their brethren in and of the Church of England," which is as

beautiful in diction as it is admirable for its affectionate pathos. They say, "We desire you would be pleased to take notice of the principals and body of our company, as those who esteem it our honor to call the Church of England, from whence we arise, our dear mother, and cannot part from our native country, where she specially resideth, without much sadness of heart and many tears in our eyes; ever acknowledging, that such hope and part as we have obtained in the common salvation, we have received in her bosom, and sucked it from her breasts. We leave it not, therefore, as loathing that milk, wherewith we were nourished, but blessing God for the parentage and education, as members of the same body, shall always rejoice in her good, and unfeignedly grieve for any sorrow that shall ever betide her; and, while we have breath, sincerely desire and endeavor the continuance and abundance of her welfare, with the enlargement of her bounds in the kingdom of Christ Jesus."*

There was, unquestionably, an entire sincerity in these expressions of attachment to the Church of England. There was, as they judged, no inconsistency in their subsequent conduct, in forming churches, from which Episcopacy, and all the ceremonies of the parent Church, were excluded. Their love for that Church was founded on her doctrines, not on her ceremonies. They recognised in her articles the genuine faith, once delivered to the saints. Her ceremonies they regarded as unseemly appendages, the relics of Popish superstition, of which they desired to divest her. They loved the inward spirit, not the outward form. They did reverence to the majestic soul, while they looked with sorrow on her fantastic attire. They would have remained in her bosom, and submitted to much which they deemed undesirable, if she would have permitted them to reject what they considered as positively unlawful and wrong. But as she left them no alternative but unconditional submission, or exile, they departed for America; and when they came to form churches here, they endeavored to incorporate that soul in a body befitting her dignity. The American church was, in their view, the Church of England, redeemed and regenerated, hold-

* Hutchinson, vol. i. Appendix, No. 1.

ing to her former self a similar relation to that which the just man made perfect bears to the saint who is still on earth, and encumbered with his diseased and mortal body.

A church was formed at Salem, on the 6th of August, 1629, when thirty persons entered into a covenant in writing, and the Rev. Mr. Skelton was ordained, or instituted, as the pastor, and the Rev. Mr. Higginson as the teacher; these offices being considered as distinct, and both being deemed essential to the welfare of a church. The church thus formed was entirely independent. The Governor of Plymouth, and other members of the church there, who had been invited to attend the ceremony, were not permitted to give the right hand of fellowship to the new church, till an explicit declaration had been made, that this service was not meant to indicate any right of interference or control. The pastor and teacher were inducted into office by the vote of the church, and by the imposition of the hands of the ruling elder, as the organ of the church. Thus careful were this body to exclude, at the outset, all authority but that of the Head of the Church. Several of the inhabitants, among whom Messrs. John and Samuel Brown were the principal men, opposed the new church, because the liturgy of the Church of England was rejected.* They accordingly formed another society, in which the book of common prayer was read. The schism was speedily remedied, by a measure which was much more energetic than just. Mr. John Brown and his brother, the leaders, were sent to England, and their followers quietly relinquished their opposition.

A church was formed at Charlestown, July 30, 1630, by Governor Winthrop and a number of other persons, who signed a covenant, in which they simply promised to "walk

* The reply of the ministers of the church to this objection is worthy of notice, as confirming the views which have been stated respecting their feelings toward the Church of England. "They did not (they declared) separate from the Church of England, nor from the ordinances of God there, but only from the corruptions and disorders of that Church; that they came away from the common prayer and ceremonies, and had suffered much for their non-conformity in their native land, and therefore, being in a place where they might have their liberty, they neither could nor would use them, inasmuch as they judged the imposition of these things to be a violation of the worship of God." Magnalia, b. i. ch. iv. § 8.

in all our ways according to the rule of the Gospel, and in all sincere conformity to his holy ordinances, and in mutual love and respect to each other, so near as God shall give us grace."* On the 27th of August, the Rev. John Wilson was elected teacher. "We used imposition of hands," says Governor Winthrop, "but with this protestation by all, that it was only as a sign of election and confirmation, not of any intent that Mr. Wilson should renounce his ministry he received in England."† Thus careful were they to guard the independence of the church, while they preserved due respect for the Church of England, whose ministers, so far as they were pastors and teachers, they acknowledged and honored.

When the Governor and the greater portion of the colonists removed to Boston, the church, with the minister, removed thither. It remained without a house for public worship till August, 1632, when a building was commenced,‡ on the south side of State street, opposite the spot where the Branch Bank now stands. It was a humble structure, with a thatched roof and mud walls.§ Perhaps, however, the metropolis has never seen a more devout congregation than that which was accustomed to assemble there. It well illustrates the piety of the founders, and their high regard for the ministry, that at the first Court of Assistants, held on board the Arbella, at Charlestown, August 23, 1630, the first question propounded was, *How shall the ministers be maintained?* It was ordered, that houses be built for them with convenient speed, at the public charge, and their salaries were established. These were sufficiently moderate. Mr. Wilson was allowed twenty pounds per annum, till his wife should arrive, and Mr. Phillips, the minister of Watertown, was to receive thirty pounds.||

The ecclesiastical polity, now commenced, was afterwards moulded into a more regular and permanent form, by the personal influence of Mr. Cotton, and by the authority of the platform adopted in 1648. The great principles which were established were these: each church is inde-

* Snow's History of Boston, p. 30.
† Winthrop, vol. i. p. 32. ‡ Ibid, vol. i. p. 87.
§ Snow's Hist. of Boston, p. 42. || Winthrop, vol. i. p. 30, note.

pendent, and possesses the sole power of governing itself, according to the Scriptures; piety and a holy life are the qualifications for church membership; the officers of a church are pastors, teachers, ruling elders and deacons, and are to be chosen by the church itself; the ordination of ministers is to be performed with imposition of hands, by the ministers of the neighboring churches. These and other principles, which, with some exceptions, are still held by the Independent, Congregational and Baptist churches, were joined, with another article, which was the source of manifold mischiefs to the colony. It is thus expressed, in the words of Hubbard, (540): "Church government and civil government may very well stand together, it being the duty of the magistrate to take care of matters of religion, and to improve his civil authority for observing the duties commanded in the first as well as in the second table; seeing the end of their office is not only the quiet and peaceable life of the subject in matters of righteousness and honesty, but also in matters of godliness." 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.

The ecclesiastical polity being adjusted, the civil government was made to conform to it.* To the excellent founders, religion was the most precious of all interests, and civil government was, in their view, useful, no further than it was necessary for the good order of the community, and the security of their religious privileges. Having escaped from the grasp of the civil power in England, they resolved, that in the new state to be formed here, the church should hold the first place. They wished to erect here a community, which should be itself a church, governed by the laws of Jesus Christ, flourishing in the peace and beauty of holiness, and realizing the glorious visions of the prophets. It was a noble conception, a sublime purpose, of which none but pure hearted men would have been capable. That they failed in accomplishing all their plans, was the natural result of human corruption; but they succeeded in forming a community, more moral, more easily governed, better educated, more thoroughly under the control of religious principles, and more truly free, than the world had then seen. At the General Court, held so early as May 18, 1631, it was ordered, that no person should be admitted to

* Extract from a letter of Mr. Cotton. Hutchinson, Appendix iii.

the privileges of a freeman, unless he was a member of some church in the colony. This law was, no doubt, unjust, and the colony was afterwards forced to repeal it. It was, also, injurious to the interests of religion, for it made church membership an object of earnest desire, for political purposes, and thus introduced men without piety into the church. It led to the adoption, to some extent, of the ruinous principle, that piety is not necessary to church membership, and it was one of the causes of that unhappy strife, which issued in the introduction of the halfway covenant.* But the law is characteristic of the founders, and proves their determination to keep the state subordinate to the church. They also adopted, as the basis of their civil code, the laws of Moses, so far as they were of a moral nature, though, as Roger Williams remarked, "they extended their moral equity to so many particulars as to take in the whole judicial law." They punished crimes, not by the laws of England, but by those of Moses. Idolatry, blasphemy, man stealing, adultery, and some other crimes, not punishable with death by the laws of the parent country, were made capital. Every inhabitant was compelled to contribute, in proportion to his ability, to the support of religion. This adoption of the Mosaic code, and a constant disposition to seek for precedents in the Old Testament, will account for many of the measures which have been attributed to the bigotry of our fathers.

* See Dr. Wisner's valuable Historical Discourses, May 9 and 16, 1830.

CHAPTER III.

Mr. Williams refuses to unite with the Boston church—is invited to Salem—interference of the General Court—removes to Plymouth—the Indians—difficulties at Plymouth—birth of Mr. Williams' eldest child.

On the 5th of February, 1630–1,* as we have already stated, Mr. Williams arrived in America, where he was to become one of the founders of a great nation. As a minister of the Gospel, he would naturally seek, without delay, for an opportunity to fulfil his office. He was, it is probable, without property, and a sense of duty would concur with the dictates of prudence, to urge him to inquire for some situation where he might be useful, while he obtained a maintenance. The church in Boston were supplied with a pastor, and the great Cotton was expected to become their teacher. There was, however, another difficulty to which we shall soon have occasion to recur.

In a few weeks after Mr. Williams' arrival, he was invited by the church at Salem to become an assistant to Mr. Skelton, as teacher, in the place of the accomplished Higginson, who died a few months before. Mr. Williams complied with the invitation, and commenced his ministry in that town. But the civil authority speedily interfered, in accordance with the principle afterwards established in the platform, that "if any church, one or more, shall grow schismatical, rending itself from the communion of other churches, or shall walk incorrigibly and obstinately in any corrupt way of their own, contrary to the rule of the word; in such case, the magistrate is to put forth his coercive power, as the matter shall require."†

On the 12th of April, says Governor Winthrop (vol. i. p. 53) "at a Court, holden at Boston, (upon information to the Governor, that they of Salem had called Mr. Williams to the office of teacher,) a letter was written from the Court

* Mr. Backus, and some other writers, have this date 1631, either by mistake, or by neglecting the difference between the old and the new style. Some confusion has thus been introduced into the accounts of Mr. Williams.

† Magnalia, b. v. ch. 17.

to Mr. Endicott to this effect : That whereas Mr. Williams had refused to join with the congregation at Boston, because they would not make a public declaration of their repentance for having communion with the churches of England, while they lived there; and besides, had declared his opinion that the magistrate might not punish a breach of the Sabbath, nor any other offence, as it was a breach of the first table; therefore they marvelled they would choose him without advising with the Council; and withal desiring him that they would forbear to proceed till they had conferred about it."

The first of these charges is made in very indefinite terms.* It does not appear, what was the degree of conformity which the members of the church had practised in England, nor what degree of criminality was, in the estimation of Mr. Williams, attributable to their conduct. It is well known, that some of the Puritans did maintain, till they left England, a connection with the church, from whose ritual they secretly dissented, and whose corruptions they deeply deplored. We have already stated, that Governor Winthrop and his associates had not separated from the church when they left England, but acknowledged themselves, at the moment of their departure, as among her children. Many good men considered this conformity as a pusillanimous and sinful connivance at evil, tending to sanction and perpetuate the corruptions of the church. Mr. Cotton himself, being forced, by the intolerance of the hierarchy, either to submit to their ritual, or to suffer the vengeance of the High Commission Court, resolved to leave England. He travelled in disguise to London. "Here," says Cotton Mather, (Magnalia, b. iii. chap. 1. § 18) "the Lord had a work for him to do, which he little thought of. Some reverend and renowned ministers of our Lord in that great city, who yet had not seen sufficient reason to expose themselves unto persecution for the sake of non-conformity, but looked upon the imposed ceremonies as indifferent and sufferable trifles, and weighed not the aspect of the second commandment upon all the parts and

* Emerson in his History of the First Church is not more explicit He says, (p. 13) "It has been said of this man, that he refused communion," &c.

means of instituted worship, took this opportunity for a conference with Mr. Cotton; being persuaded, that since he was no passionate, but a very judicious man, they should prevail with him rather to conform, than to leave his work and his land. Upon the motion of a conference, Mr. Cotton most readily yielded; and first, all their arguments for conformity, together with Mr. Byfield's, Mr. Whately's, and Mr. Sprint's, were produced, all of which Mr. Cotton answered, unto their wonderful satisfaction. Then he gave his arguments for his non-conformity, and the reasons why he must rather forego his ministry, or, at least, his country, than wound his conscience with unlawful compliance; the issue whereof was, that instead of bringing Mr. Cotton back to what he had now forsaken, he brought them off altogether from what they had hitherto practised. Every one of those eminent persons, Dr. Goodwin, Mr. Nye, and Mr. Davenport, now became all that he was, and at last left the kingdom for their being so."

If, then, these distinguished ministers had practised a conformity which Mr. Cotton esteemed "unlawful," and which Cotton Mather seems to have considered as a breach of the second commandment, it is probable, that many private Christians had done the same. The members of the Boston church had undoubtedly shared in these "compliances." But if Mr. Cotton could not conform, without wounding his conscience, he must have thought the practice criminal. There is no question, that Mr. Williams was of the same opinion; and as his temper was more ardent and bold than that of Mr. Cotton, his opposition to what he must have regarded as highly censurable, would naturally be strong and decided. It is not very surprising, therefore, if, on his arrival in America, with a vivid sense of recent wrong from the persecuting church, he was disinclined to a cordial union with those who had, in any measure, yielded to her despotic pretensions, and sanctioned, by any acts of compliance, her unscriptural requirements. We are not told, precisely, in what terms, and to what extent, he wished the members of the Boston church to express their repentance for their conduct. He, perhaps, allowed his feelings to bias his judgment in this case; and to make him forget his own principles of liberty of conscience; but the facts to which we have alluded show,

that his objections were not altogether frivolous, nor his conduct the offspring of bigotry and caprice. It appears, that his feelings were afterwards allayed; and while at Plymouth, the next year, he communed with Governor Winthrop and other gentlemen from Boston.*

The other allegation, made in the extract from Winthrop, that Mr. Williams denied the power of the civil magistrate to punish men for violations of the first table of the law,† that is, in other words, for the neglect, or the erroneous performance, of their duties to God, is one, which, at this day, needs little discussion. Time has wrought out a triumphant vindication of this great principle. The doctrine, that man is accountable to his Maker alone for his religious opinions and practices, and is entitled to an unrestrained liberty to maintain and enjoy them, provided that he does not interfere with the rights of others, and with the civil peace of society, has won for itself, in this country, at least, a place among the undisputed principles of thought and action. Ample experience has demonstrated, even in New-England, the manifold evils which spring from intrusting to civil rulers the power to legislate for the church, to control the conscience, and to regulate the intercourse between men and his Creator. We shall have occasion to recur to this topic. It is sufficient now to say, that Mr. Williams stood on the firm ground of truth and of enlightened policy, when he denied to the civil magistrate the right to interfere with the consciences of men.‡ There is no allegation, that he failed, on this occasion, in due re-

* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 91.

† The moral law was considered as divided into two tables, the first table containing the first four commandments, which relate to our duties towards God; and the second table, containing the other six commandments, which prescribe certain duties towards men.

‡ The note of Mr. Savage, in his edition of Winthrop, vol. i. p. 53, deserves to be quoted:

"All, who are inclined to separate that connection of secular concerns with the duties of religion, to which most governments, in all countries, have been too much disposed, will think this opinion of Roger Williams redounds to his praise. The laws of the first table, or the four commandments of the decalogue first in order, should be rather impressed by early education than by penal enactments of the legislature; and the experience of Rhode Island and other States of our Union is perhaps favorable to the sentiment of this earliest American reformer. Too much regulation was the error of our fathers, who were perpetually arguing from analogies in the Levitical institutions, and encumbering themselves with the yoke of Jewish customs."

spect for the constituted authorities; but he claimed the right of a freeman to speak freely of their principles and measures. His natural temperament would give warmth and energy to his remonstrance. A calmer man than he might have been moved, if, when driven from his native land by intolerance, he found, in the country to which he had fled, the same principles maintained, the same usurpation of power over the conscience claimed, as a regular attribute of the civil authority.

It appears, therefore, that the General Court had little cause for their interference between Mr. Williams and the church at Salem. Their right to interfere, for any cause, will not now be maintained by any man. That church, though she was probably aware of the disapprobation and meditated interference of the Court, seems to have disregarded it, and on the 12th of April, the same day on which the Court was held, received Mr. Williams, as her minister.* She thus consulted her duty as well as her true interests. Jesus Christ is the only King and Legislator of his church. He has given her his statute book, and it is as inconsistent with her duty, as it ought to be repugnant to her feelings, to permit any attempt to abridge the rights which her Lord has bestowed on her. The choice of her pastors and teachers is one of her most sacred rights, and most important duties. She is bound to exercise this high privilege, in humble dependence on the teachings of divine wisdom, but with a resolute resistance of attempts, from any quarter, to control her election.

Notwithstanding the unwarrantable proceedings of the Court, which must have been offensive both to the principles and the feelings of Mr. Williams, we find him, the next month, (the 18th of May, 1631) taking the usual oath on his admission as a freeman.† This fact is worthy of notice, because it proves, that he was willing to honor the

* 1 His. Col. vi. p. 246.

† Prince, p. 355. Mr. Williams' name is found in a list of persons, "desiring to be made freemen," at the last Court, which met October 19, 1630, nearly four months before his arrival in America. Prince, p. 331. This author explains the difficulty, by saying (p. 377,) that the October list "comprehends all those who entered their desires between that time and May 18, 1631." It appears, therefore, that Mr. Williams, with characteristic decision, entered his name on the list very soon after his arrival.

civil authorities, within their proper sphere, and that he desired to become a permanent and useful citizen. It shows, too, that he had no objection to an oath, when administered in a proper manner, and for suitable ends. At this very Court, the law was made, which excluded from the rights of freemen every person, who was not a member of some one of the churches. Whether the difficulty which had already risen respecting Mr. Williams, had any influence in producing this measure, cannot now be ascertained.

Notwithstanding that the church at Salem had received Mr. Williams, he was not permitted to remain in peace. "Persecution," says Dr. Bentley,* "instead of calm expostulation, instantly commenced, and Williams, before the close of summer, was obliged to retire to Plymouth." That this separation from the church at Salem was not a voluntary one, on her part or on his, may be presumed, from the fact, asserted by the historian of Salem just quoted, that "he was embraced with joy at Salem, and throughout all his life supported a high place in their affections, as a truly godly man."† His return to that town, by their invitation, two years after, is a satisfactory proof that the church there felt a confidence in his piety, and an attachment to his person and ministry.‡

At Plymouth, Mr. Williams was received with much respect, and became an assistant to Mr. Ralph Smith, the pastor of the church there. Governor Bradford speaks of Mr. Williams in honorable terms,§ and even Morton, who was not much disposed to speak favorably of him, acknowledges that he "was well accepted as an assistant in the ministry."||

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* 1 His. Col. vi. pp. 24, 56. † Ibid.

‡ Mr. Baylies, in his Memoir of Plymouth, vol. i. p. 266, says, that Mr. Williams left Salem, because he had "become discontented in consequence of some difference of opinion between him and Mr. Skelton, the pastor." This appears to be a mistake. Mr. Upham, in his Second Century Lecture, p. 12, calls Mr. Skelton, "the faithful defender of Roger Williams."

§ "He was freely entertained among us, according to our poor ability, exercised his gifts among us, and after some time was admitted a member of the church, and his teaching well approved; for the benefit whereof I shall bless God, and am thankful to him ever for his sharpest admonitions and reproofs, so far as they agreed with truth." Prince, p. 377.

|| Memorial, p. 151.

During Mr. Williams' residence at Plymouth, Governor Winthrop, with Mr. Wilson, of Boston, and other gentlemen, visited that town.* Winthrop's account of the visit is so strongly illustrative of the manners of those times, that it may be properly inserted.

"1632. September 25. The Governor, with Mr. Wilson, pastor of Boston, and the two Captains, &c. went aboard the Lyon, and from thence Mr. Peirce carried them in his shallop to Wessaguscus.† The next morning Mr. Peirce returned to his ship, and the Governor and his company went on foot to Plymouth, and came thither within the evening. The Governor of Plymouth, Mr. William Bradford, (a very discreet and grave man) with Mr. Brewster, the elder, and some others, came forth and met them without the town, and conducted them to the Governor's house, where they were very kindly entertained and feasted every day at several houses. On the Lord's day there was a sacrament, which they did partake in; and in the afternoon Mr. Roger Williams (according to their custom) propounded a question,

* Cotton Mather, in his Magnalia, b. ii. ch. iv. relates the following incident, as having occurred during this visit. Though the extract shows his strong prejudices, it may be worth an insertion as an illustration of the temper and manner of those times. "There were at this time in Plymouth two ministers, leavened so far with the humors of the rigid separation, that they insisted vehemently upon the unlawfulness of calling any unregenerate man by the name of *good-man such a one*, until by their indiscreet urging of this whimsey, the place began to be disquieted. The wiser people being troubled at these trifles, they took the opportunity of Governor Winthrop's being there, to have the thing publicly propounded in the congregation; who, in answer thereunto, distinguished between a theological and a moral goodness; adding, that when juries were first used in England, it was usual for the crier, after the names of persons fit for that service were called over, to bid them all, *Attend, good men and true;* whence it grew to be a civil custom in the English nation for neighbors living by one another to call one another good-man such a one, and it was pity now to make a stir about a civil custom, so innocently introduced. And that speech of Mr. Winthrop's put a lasting stop to the little, idle, whimsical conceits, then beginning to grow obstreperous."

If the preceding statement is true, it may be charitably viewed as an indication of the scrupulous conscientiousness of Mr. Williams, who thought, perhaps, that *names* are sometimes *things*, and was unwilling that the term *good man* should be indiscriminately applied to all men. If he yielded to Gov. Winthrop's explanation, it proves, that he was not so obstinate in trifles, as he has been represented.

† Weymouth.

to which the pastor, Mr. Smith, spake briefly; then Mr. Williams prophesied; and after the Governor of Plymouth spake to the question; after him, the elder; then some two or three more of the congregation. Then the elder desired the Governor of Massachusetts and Mr. Wilson, to speak to it, which they did. When this was ended, the deacon, Mr. Fuller, put the congregation in mind of their duty of contribution; whereupon the Governor and all the rest went down to the deacons' seat, and put into the box, and then returned." Vol. i. p. 91.

While at Plymouth, Mr. Williams enjoyed favorable opportunities of intercourse with the Indians, who frequently visited that town. It appears, too, that he made excursions among them, to learn their manners and their language, and thus to qualify himself to promote their welfare. His whole life furnished evidence of the sincerity of his declaration, in one of his letters, "My soul's desire was, to do the natives good." He became acquainted with Massasoit, or, as he was also called, Ousamequin, the sachem of the Pokanokets, and father of the famous Philip. He also formed an intimacy with Canonicus, the Narraganset sachem. He secured the confidence of these savage chiefs, by acts of kindness, by presents, and not less, perhaps, by studying their language. He says, in a letter, written near the close of his life, "God was pleased to give me a painful, patient spirit, to lodge with them in their filthy smoky holes, (even while I lived at Plymouth and Salem) to gain their tongue."

The effects of this intimacy with the sachems were very important. We shall see, by his subsequent history, that his success, in purchasing lands for himself and for the other settlers in Rhode Island, was the result mainly of his personal influence with the Indians. We discern, in these preparatory measures, the hand of God, who was designing to employ Mr. Williams as an instrument in establishing a new colony, and in preserving New-England from the fury of the savages.

There is reason to believe, that for some time previously to his banishment, he had conceived the idea of residing among the Indians, and that in his intercourse with the sachems, some propositions had been made respecting a cession of land. His strong desire to benefit the natives

was a sufficient inducement; and he had, perhaps, seen such indications of the state of feeling towards him among the colonists, as to awaken an apprehension that he would not long be allowed to remain within their jurisdiction.

Mr. Williams continued about two years at Plymouth. While there, we may easily believe, he uttered his sentiments on those points which had occasioned his removal from Salem, as well as on other subjects, in relation to which his opinions were at variance with those of that age. They were not acceptable to the principal personages at Plymouth, though it does not appear that any public expression of disapprobation was made by the church. His heart was evidently drawn towards Salem, and being invited to return,* to assist Mr. Skelton, whose declining health unfitted him for his duties, Mr. Williams requested a dismission from the church at Plymouth. Some of the members were unwilling to be separated from him, and accompanied him to Salem, after ineffectual efforts to detain him at Plymouth.† But the ruling elder, Mr. Brewster, prevailed on the church to dismiss him and his adherents. Mr. Brewster probably disliked his opinions, and feared that he would be successful in diffusing them at Plymouth. He, therefore, alarmed the church, by expressing his fears, that Mr. Williams would "run the same course of rigid separation and anabaptistry, which Mr. John Smith, the Se-Baptist, at Amsterdam, had done."‡ Anabaptism was a spectre, which haunted the imaginations of the early settlers. The word possessed a mysterious power of inspiring terror and creating odium. It has, perhaps, been some-

* Backus, vol. i. p. 56. Some writers insinuate, that he went back without an invitation.

† Memorial, p. 151.

‡ Memorial, p. 151. Mr. Smith was an English minister, who separated from the Church of England, and went to Holland, where he embraced the sentiments of the Baptists. He is said to have baptized himself, for want of a suitable administrator, and hence was called a Se-Baptist. Dr. Toulmin remarks, on this assertion, "This is said on the authority of his opponents only, who, from the acrimony with which they wrote against him, it may be reasonably concluded, might be ready to take up a report against him upon slender evidence." Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. ii. p. 72, note. Mr. Neal says, that "he was a learned man, of good abilities, but of an unsettled head." His adoption of Baptist principles explains this reproach.

times employed to justify measures, which might else have wanted the appearance of justice and humanity. It was one of those terms, which, in the language of the most original writer, perhaps, of this age—himself liable to the charge of anabaptism*—"can be made the symbol of all that is absurd and execrable, so that the very sound of it shall irritate the passions of the multitude, as dogs have been taught to bark, at the name of a neighboring tyrant."†

While Mr. Williams was at Plymouth, his eldest daughter was born there, in the first week in August, 1633.‡ She was named Mary, after her mother.

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* The Rev. John Foster, in his essay on the epithet Romantic.

† See Appendix B. for some remarks on the Anabaptists.

‡ Backus, vol. i. pp. 57, 516. Dr. Bentley, 1 His. Col. vi. p. 247, says, that the child was born in Salem, but Mr. Backus' statement is more probable, and he quotes the Providence Records as authority

CHAPTER IV.

Returns to Salem—Ministers Meetings—Court again interferes—the rights of the Indians—his book against the patent—wearing of veils—controversy about the cross in the colors.

Mr. Williams left Plymouth probably about the end of August, 1633.* He resumed his labors at Salem, as an assistant to Mr. Skelton, though, for some cause, he was not elected to any office till after Mr. Skelton's death. Perhaps the expectation of this event induced the church to delay the election of Mr. Williams.

Soon after his return to Salem, his watchful love of liberty seems to have excited him, together with the venerable Mr. Skelton, to express some apprehension of the tendencies of a meeting, which several ministers had established, for the ostensible and probably real purpose of mutual improvement, and consultation respecting their duties, and the interests of religion. Winthrop thus states, under the date of November, 1633:

"The ministers in the Bay and Saugus did meet once a fortnight, at one of their houses, by course, where some

* There is a strange confusion in the statements of different writers respecting the duration of Mr. Williams' stay at Plymouth, and the date of his removal. Morton says, that he preached at Plymouth about three years, and was dismissed in 1634. Baylies repeats this statement. Hutchinson says, that he remained at Plymouth three or four years; Cotton Mather says two years, and Dr. Bentley states, that he returned to Salem before the end of the year 1632. But Mr. Backus supposes the time of his removal from Plymouth to have been in August, 1633. "His first child was born there the first week in August, 1633, (Providence Records) and Mr. Cotton, who arrived at Boston the fourth of September following, says, he had removed into the Bay before his arrival." (Tenet Washed, part 2, p. 4.) It is certain, from Winthrop's Journal, vol. i. p. 117, that Mr. Williams had returned to Salem previously to November, 1633, for under that date Winthrop says, that he "was removed from Plymouth thither, (but not in any office, though he exercised by way of prophecy.") The expression implies, that he had *recently* removed, and this agrees with the supposition that he returned to Salem in August.

question of moment was debated. Mr. Skelton, the pastor of Salem, and Mr. Williams, who was removed from Plymouth thither, (but not in any office, though he exercised by way of prophecy) took some exception against it, as fearing it might grow in time to a presbytery or superintendency, to the prejudice of the churches' liberties. But this fear was without cause; for they were all clear in that point, that no church or person can have power over another church; neither did they, in their meetings, exercise any such jurisdiction." Vol. i. p. 116.

It may be true, that the fears of Mr. Skelton and Mr. Williams were without cause, and, in our own times, such meetings of ministers are held, with much advantage to themselves and to the churches, and without exciting alarm. But before we decide, that Mr. Williams was unnecessarily apprehensive, and especially before we accuse him of a turbulent and factious temper, it deserves inquiry, whether his experience of ecclesiastical usurpation and intolerance in England might not justify the fear, that the frequent consultations of the ministers were not ominous of good to the independence of the churches and to liberty of conscience. Mr. Skelton, however, seems to have been the principal in this opposition.* It may have been a good service to the cause of liberty and of religion. A watchful dread of encroachments on civil or religious freedom is not useless, in any age. It was a prominent trait in the character of the colonists, before the revolution, and it will always be cherished by a free people. It is a salutary provision, like the sense of fear in the human bosom. It may sometimes cause an unnecessary alarm, as the watchman may arouse the city with an unfounded report of danger. But these evils are preferable to the incautious negligence, which fears not peril, and thus invites it.

But more important causes of offence to the magistrates and the clergy were soon found, in the sentiments and conduct of Mr. Williams. So early as December 27, 1633, we find the General Court again convened to consult respecting him:

"December 27. The Governor and Assistants met at

* Mr. Skelton's name is first mentioned by Winthrop, and Dr. Bentley (1 His. Col. vi. p. 248) attributes to Mr. Skelton the open opposition

Boston, and took into consideration a treatise, which Mr. Williams (then of Salem) had sent to them, and which he had formerly written to the Governor and Council of Plymouth, wherein, among other things, he disputed their right to the lands they possessed here, and concluded that, claiming by the King's grant, they could have no title, nor otherwise, except they compounded with the natives. For this, taking advice with some of the most judicious ministers, (who much condemned Mr. Williams' error and presumption) they gave order, that he should be convented at the next Court, to be censured, &c. There were three passages chiefly whereat they were much offended: 1. for that he chargeth King James to have told a solemn public lie, because, in his patent, he blessed God that he was the first Christian prince that had discovered this land: 2. for that he chargeth him and others with blasphemy, for calling Europe Christendom, or the Christian world: 3. for that he did personally apply to our present King, Charles, these three places in the Revelations, viz: [blank.]*

"Mr. Endicott being absent, the Governor wrote to him to let him know what was done, and withal added divers arguments to confute the said errors, wishing him to deal with Mr. Williams to retract the same, &c. Whereto he returned a very modest and discreet answer. Mr. Williams also wrote to the Governor, and also to him and the rest of the Council very submissively, professing his intent to have been only to have written for the private satisfaction of the Governor, &c. of Plymouth, without any purpose to have stirred any further in it, if the Governor here had not required a copy of him; withal offering his book, or any part of it, to be burnt.

"At the next Court he appeared *penitently*, and gave satisfaction of his intention and loyalty. So it was left, and nothing done in it." Vol. i. p. 122.

The book, which occasioned these transactions, has not

* "Perhaps," says Mr. Savage, "the same expressions from another would have given less offence. From Williams they were not at first received in the mildest, or even the most natural sense; though further reflection satisfied the magistrates that his were not dangerous. The passages from the Apocalypse were probably not *applied* to the honor of the King; and I regret, therefore, that Winthrop did not preserve them."

been preserved.* We know not in what terms Mr. Williams uttered his offensive opinions. The doctrine which he maintained, that the charter from the King of England could not convey to the colonists the right to occupy the lands of the Indians, without their consent, is, in the highest degree, honorable to his head and his heart. He clearly saw the utter absurdity and injustice of the pretension, whether made by the Pope or by a Protestant monarch, of sovereignty over other countries, merely on the ground of prior discovery, or of the barbarous and wandering character of the inhabitants. It may be a useful regulation among nations, that the first discoverers of a country shall possess a superior right to intercourse with the inhabitants for trade or other purposes. But no people, whether Pagans or Christians, can rightfully be subjected to a sway, to which they have not voluntarily submitted. This fundamental principle of human rights applies to the Indians. They were independent tribes, and could, in no sense, be considered as the subjects of the King of England. The fact, that some of his vessels had sailed along their coasts, no more gave him a title to be their sovereign, than the passage of one of their canoes up the Thames would have transferred to Canonicus or Powhatan a claim to the crown of England. If the King possessed no jurisdiction over the Indians, he could not, of course, convey a title to their lands. It was this point on which Mr. Williams insisted with special earnestness. "His own account of this matter," says Mr. Backus, (vol. i. p. 58,) "informs us, that the sin of the patents which lay so heavy on his mind was, that therein 'Christian Kings (so called) are invested with a right, by virtue of their *Christianity*, to take and give away the lands and countries of other men.'† And he tells us,

* It was probably this book, to which Mr. Coddington alluded, in his bitter letter against Mr. Williams, inserted at the close of Fox's Reply. Mr. W. is there charged with having "written a quarto against the King's patent and authority."

† A writer in the North American Review, for October, 1830, p. 404, says: "The Kings of Europe did, in some instances, assert the right to subdue the natives by force, and to appropriate their territory, without their consent, to the uses of the colonists. The King of Spain founded this right solely on the grant of the Pope, as the vicegerent of Christ upon earth. The Kings of England, in the sixteenth century, placed it on the superior claims, which Christians possessed over infidels."

that this evil so deeply afflicted his soul, that 'before his troubles and banishment, he drew up a letter, not without the approbation of some of the chiefs of New-England, then tender also upon this point before God, directed unto the King himself, humbly acknowledging the evil of THAT PART of the patent, which respects the donation of lands,'" &c.* And the colonists themselves acted, generally, on the very principle which Mr. Williams advocated. They purchased the lands of the natives, for a trifling recompense, as it may seem to us, but such as satisfied the Indians. Cotton Mather states, though he reckons it as a proof of *civility*, that "notwithstanding the patent which they had for the country, they fairly purchased of the natives the several tracts of land which they afterwards possessed."† Dr. Dwight asserts, that "exclusively of the country of the Pequods, the inhabitants of Connecticut bought, unless I am deceived, every inch of ground contained within that colony, of its native proprietors. The people of Rhode-Island, Plymouth, Massachusetts and New-Hampshire, proceeded wholly in the same equitable manner. Until Philip's war, in 1675, not a single foot of ground was claimed or occupied by the colonists on any other score but that of fair purchase."‡ These facts are honorable to the pilgrims, and assuredly Roger Williams is entitled to some praise for steadily advocating this policy from the beginning. He, perhaps, construed the patent with too much rigor. The King did not, it may be, mean all that his lofty royal style implied. In his patent to the Plymouth Company, he alludes to the "wonderful plague" which had raged among the natives, and left the "large and goodly territories deserted as it were by the natural inhabitants." He nevertheless calls himself the "sovereign lord" of the whole continent, and therefore by his "special grace, mere motion, and certain knowledge," gives and grants to the Company a large part of the continent, from sea to sea, without intimating that any rights belonged to the natives. A warm friend to the Indians might easily construe such an instrument as a designed and flagrant usurpation of their rights. We have seen how the colonists of New-England practised under the patent, and Mr. Cot-

* Reply to Cotton on the Bloody Tenet, pp. 276, 277.
† Magnalia, book i. c. v. § 5. ‡ Travels, vol. i. p. 167.

ton, in his reply to Roger Williams, affirms: "It was neither the King's intendment, nor the English planters', to take possession of the country by murder or by robbery, but either to take possession of the void places of the country, by the law of nature, (for *vacuum domicilium cedit occupanti*) or if we took any lands from the natives, it was by way of purchase and free consent. We have not our land merely by right of patent from the King, but that the natives are true owners of all that they possess or improve. Neither do I know any amongst us, that either then were, or now are, of another mind." Bloody Tenet Washed, p. 26.

But this subject deserves a more full consideration than we can here give it. The suggestions now offered may suffice to exhibit the upright integrity and sound judgment which drew from Mr. Williams his declarations in favor of the natives. It seems, that his book discussed the abstract question, and probably it was called forth by some expression of the opposite doctrine. It was not intended for the public eye, but was a private communication to the Governor and other gentlemen of Plymouth. He could not be charged with a public attack in this book on the charter. Nor is it certain, that he questioned the authority of the charter, so far as it could operate without an infringement of the rights of the Indians. He was, indeed, charged by Mr. Cotton (Hubbard, 210) with insisting that the charter ought to be returned to the King. This would certainly have been very unwise, but we can hardly suppose that Mr. Williams would carry his opposition to this unreasonable length. Winthrop does not intimate that any such opinion was expressed, and Mr. Cotton may have misunderstood Mr. Williams' real meaning.

In regard to the passages which were construed as disrespectful to the King, it may be sufficient to say, that his own words are not reported; and at a meeting of the Court, in January, the magistrates and the clergy acknowledged that they had taken unnecessary offence. It is probable that they misunderstood him. Winthrop says, under date of January 24, 1633–4: "The Governor and Council met again at Boston, to consider of Mr. Williams' letter, &c. when, with the advice of Mr. Cotton and Mr. Wilson, and weighing his letter, and further considering of the aforesaid offensive passages in his book, (which being written in

very obscure and implicative phrases, might well admit of doubtful interpretation,) they found the matters not to be so evil as at first they seemed. Whereupon they agreed, that, upon his retraction, &c. or taking an oath of allegiance to the King, &c. it should be passed over." Vol. i. p. 123.

The conduct of Mr. Williams on this occasion was, it must be acknowledged, mild and conciliatory. He offered to burn the offensive book, though he did not retract his opinions. He wrote to the Court, we are told, "submissively," and afterwards appeared before them "penitently," and furnished satisfactory evidence of his "loyalty." We cannot determine, how far these expressions may be construed to imply an acknowledgment of error on the part of Mr. Williams; but they are valuable, as a proof that he was not so obstinate and contumacious as the world have been taught to regard him.

He was now permitted, for a while, to continue his ministry at Salem, without interruption from the magistrates. He was popular as a preacher, and the people at Salem became strongly attached to him. Mr. Skelton died in August, 1634, and Mr. Williams was soon after invited to become the teacher of the church. The magistrates sent to the church a request, that they would not ordain him; but the church persisted, and Mr. Williams was regularly introduced to the office of teacher.

This "great contempt of authority," as it was afterwards pronounced to be by the magistrates and ministers, was not forgotten. We shall soon see how it was punished.

We may here take notice of two charges against Mr. Williams, which, trivial as they are, have been often alleged to his disadvantage. It has been said, that he preached on the use of veils by females, and insisted that they should wear them in religious assemblies. We have no record of his real sentiments on this frivolous subject. Dr. Bentley asserts, that Mr. Endicott had introduced it before Mr. Williams arrived, and that the latter adopted the notion, rather to gratify Mr. Endicott and Mr. Skelton, than because he felt any interest in it himself.* And if it

* Mr. Endicott's zeal on this point may be learned from the following incident, related by Winthrop: "March 7, 1633. At the lecture at Boston a question was propounded about veils. Mr. Cotton concluded, that where (by the custom of the place) they were not a

were true, that he was the author of the custom, and wasted his time in establishing it, we should regard it as a venial weakness, springing from a reverence for the Scriptures, and a desire for the decorum of public worship. Before we condemn him, we should call to mind, that other divines of great name in New-England, such as President Chauncy and John Elliot, preached vehemently against wigs, and that, in 1649, the magistrates signed a grave protest against the custom among men of wearing long hair, and requested the clergy to preach against it, "as a thing uncivil and unmanly, whereby men do deform themselves, and offend sober and modest men, and do corrupt good manners."*

The other charge is of more importance. It is said, that in consequence of Mr. Williams' preaching, Mr. Endicott cut the cross out of the military colors, as a relic of antichristian superstition. This act was doubtless unjustifiable, because the colors were established by the authority of the King, and ought to have been viewed as a merely civil regulation. But there is no evidence that Mr. Williams advised the measure. It seems rather to have been a practical application, by Mr. Endicott, of the doctrine maintained by Mr. Williams on the unlawfulness of the ceremonies and symbols which had been used in the service of idolatry and of Popery. The great controversy between the Puritans and the Prelates in England mainly turned on the use of the surplice, and the sign of the cross, and other Popish ceremonies, which the English Church retained. The Puritans would not conform to the church, on account of these ceremonies, which they regarded as abominable relics of Popery. It was a principle among them, on which they

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sign of the woman's subjection, they were not commanded by the apostle. Mr. Endicott opposed, and did maintain it by the general arguments brought by the apostle. After some debate, the Governor, perceiving it to grow to some earnestness, interposed, and so it brake off." Vol. i. p. 125.

Hutchinson (vol. i. p. 379) says, on the authority of Hubbard, that "Mr. Cotton, of Boston, happening to preach at Salem, soon after this custom began, he convinced his hearers that it had no sufficient foundation in the Scriptures. His sermon had so good an effect, that they were all ashamed of their veils, and never appeared covered with them afterwards."

* Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 142.

acted, that "such rites and ceremonies as had been abused to idolatry, and manifestly tended to lead men back to Popery and superstition, were no longer indifferent, but to be rejected as unlawful."*

Mr. Williams probably preached this doctrine at Salem, and Mr. Endicott deemed it his duty, as a magistrate, to remove from the colors the cross, which was the favorite symbol of Popery.† Dr. Bentley asserts, that Mr. Williams was the "*innocent*, though the *real* cause of it."‡ Mr. Endicott was summoned before the Court, admonished, and declared incapable, for one year, of holding any public office, as a punishment for the act; but neither he, nor the Court, appear to have attributed any blame to Mr. Williams, which we may, without a want of charity, suppose they would have done, if there had been any reasonable pretence.

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* Neal's Hist. Puritans, vol. i. p. 184.

† The question about the lawfulness of the cross caused much agitation and controversy. "Some of our chief worthies," says Cotton Mather, (Magnalia, b. vii. c. ii. § 9) "maintained their different persuasions, with weapons indeed no more dangerous than easy pens, and effects no worse than a little harmless and learned inkshed." Mr. Hooker wrote a tract of nearly thirteen pages, in defence of the cross. Winthrop says, that the Court were "doubtful of the lawful use of the cross in an ensign." The militia refused to march with the mutilated banners. The matter was finally settled, by leaving out the cross in the colors for the trained bands, and retaining it in the banners of the castle and of vessels.

‡ 1 His. Col. vi. p. 246.

CHAPTER V.

Proceedings which led to his banishment—freeman's oath—various charges against him—sentence—birth of his second child—leaves Salem for Narraganset Bay—review of the causes of his banishment.

We will now proceed to narrate the measures which issued in the banishment of Mr. Williams. We shall follow the guidance of Winthrop, as to the facts, because this truly great man wrote without the angry temper which most of the early writers on the subject exhibited.

"1634, Nov. 27. The Court was informed, that Mr. Williams, of Salem, had broken his promise to us, in teaching publicly against the King's patent, and our great sin in claiming right thereby to this country, &c. and for usual terming the churches of England antichristian. We granted summons to him for his appearance at the next Court." Winthrop, vol. i. p. 151.

We are not informed of the terms of Mr. Williams' promise, here referred to, and cannot decide how far he had broken it. The epithet which he is said to have applied to the churches in England, might, in his judgment, have been well deserved by many of them. He, of course, referred to the established churches, then practising, as the Puritans believed, idolatrous ceremonies, and under the direction of wicked men. Mr. Cotton, in his "Bloody Tenet Washed," (p. 109) acknowledges it to be a source of grief to himself and others, "that there is yet so much of those notorious evils still continuing in the parishes, (in England) worldliness, ignorance, superstition, scoffing, swearing, cursing, whoredom, drunkenness, theft, lying; I may add, also, murder, and malignity against the godly, suffered to thrust themselves into the fellowship of the churches, and to sit down with the saints at the Lord's table." We may be allowed to think, that Roger Williams was not remarkably bigoted, if he did call such churches as these antichristian, and deem it a sin to hold fellowship with them. He obeyed the summons of the Court:

"1635, Mo. 2, 30.* The Governor and Assistants sent for Mr. Williams. The occasion was, for that he had taught publicly, that a magistrate ought not to tender an oath to an unregenerate man, for that we thereby have communion with a wicked man in the worship of God, and cause him to take the name of God in vain. He was heard before all the ministers, and very clearly confuted. Mr. Endicott was at first of the same opinion, but he gave place to the truth. Vol. i. p. 157.

We may repeat, here, what ought to be constantly borne in mind, that the statements of Mr. Williams' opinions come, not from himself, but from his opponents. We need not insist on the liability to mistake, in cases where a man's sentiments are thus disjoined from all those explanations and arguments with which he would himself have accompanied them. In the present case, we are not informed of the precise views of Mr. Williams respecting oaths.† He

* That is, April 30. Winthrop adopted, a few months before, this mode of denoting time. It seems to have arisen from a desire to avoid the Roman nomenclature, as heathenish. Perhaps an aversion to the Romish church had a share in producing the change. The custom continued for more than fifty years, when it was gradually abandoned, except by the Friends, or Quakers, and Hutchinson thinks, that the popular prejudice against them hastened the decline of the custom. The months were called 1st, 2d, &c. beginning with March, and the days of the week were designated in the same way.

† Since these remarks were written, the author has found in Mr. Williams' "Hireling Ministry none of Christ's," an "Appendix as touching oaths, a query." This Appendix is as follows: "Although it be lawful (in case) for Christians to invocate the name of the Most High in swearing; yet since it is a part of his holy worship, and therefore proper unto such as are his true worshippers in spirit and in truth; and persons may as well be forced unto any part of the worship of God as unto this, since it ought not to be used but most solemnly, and in solemn and weighty cases, and (ordinarily) in such as are not otherwise determinable; since it is the voice of the two great lawgivers from God, Moses and Christ Jesus, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses (not swearing) every word shall stand: Whether the enforcing of oaths and spiritual covenants upon a nation, promiscuously, and the constant enforcing of all persons to practise the worship in the most trivial and common cases in all courts (together with the ceremonies of book and holding up the hand, &c.) be not a prostituting of the holy name of the Most High to every unclean lip, and that on slight occasions, and a taking of it by millions, and so many millions of times in vain, and whether it be not a provoking of the eyes of his jealousy who hath said, that he will not hold him (what him or them soever) guiltless, that taketh

had taken the freeman's oath in 1631. Many others have entertained doubts of the propriety of oaths, in any case, and our laws allow an individual, who feels these scruples, to substitute an affirmation. The unlawfulness of all oaths might be plausibly argued, from the words of our Saviour, Matthew, v. 34, and from those of the Apostle James, v. 12. On this ground, however, they would be equally unlawful to all men, and the distinction which Mr. Williams is said to have made between Christians and unregenerate men could not be sustained. If, however, an oath were considered, as he viewed it, as a religious act, implying devout reverence for the Supreme Being, a fear of His displeasure and desire of His favor, it would not be easy to show how an irreligious man can sincerely take an oath. Mr. Williams had probably seen oaths taken in England with such scandalous levity, and used for purposes so iniquitous, as to awaken in his mind a strong aversion to their being administered indiscriminately to the pious and the profane. We may, nevertheless, admit, that he was unnecessarily scrupulous on this point, without impeaching either his piety or his judgment. The ministers seem to have been satisfied with their success in confuting him. It is usual for disputants to claim the victory. Perhaps if Mr. Williams had recorded the event, he might have told us of the unimpaired vigor of his arguments. We have reason to believe, however, that the offensiveness of Mr. Williams' opinions respecting oaths consisted not so much in his abstract objections to their use, as in his opposition to the new oath

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his name in vain." It seems, from this paragraph, that he considered taking an oath to be an act of worship; that a *Christian* might take one on proper occasions, though not for trivial causes; that an irreligious man could not sincerely perform this act of worship; and that no man ought to be *forced* to perform this act, any more than any other act of worship. His own practice was agreeable to his theory. He says, in his George Fox digged out of his Burrowes, (Appendix, pp. 59, 60) "cases have befallen myself in the Chancery in England, &c. of the loss of great sums, which I chose to bear, through the Lord's help, rather than yield to the *formality* (then and still in use) in God's worship, [alluding, perhaps, to the use of a book, holding up the hand, &c.] though I offered to swear, in weighty cases, by the name of God, as in the presence of God, and to attest or call God to witness; and the judges told me they would rest in my testimony and way of swearing, but they could not dispense with me without an act of Parliament."

of fidelity which the Court thought proper to require of the citizens. Mr. Cotton* states the case thus: "The magistrates and other members of the General Court, upon intelligence of some Episcopal and malignant practices against the country, made an order of Court, to take trial of the fidelity of the people, not by imposing upon them, but by offering to them, an oath of fidelity, that in case any should refuse to take it, they might not betrust them with place of public charge and command. This oath, when it came abroad, he (Mr. Williams) vehemently withstood, and dissuaded sundry from it, partly because it was, he said, Christ's prerogative to have his office established by an oath; partly because an oath was part of God's worship, and God's worship was not to be put upon carnal persons, as he conceived many of the people to be. So the Court was forced to desist from that proceeding."

The reasons assigned by Mr. Cotton for Mr. Williams' opposition to the oath are, we suspect, not all the reasons which really moved him to this course. He probably viewed the act of the Court in absolving the citizens from the oath which they had already taken, and substituting another, as an illegal assumption of power. It might be understood to claim for the Court an authority superior to the charter, for it omitted the clause of the former oath, which required of the subject obedience to laws which should be "lawfully" made by the Court, and, instead of it, obliged men to swear to submit to the "*wholesome*" regulations which might be established. As the charter prohibited the passage of laws contrary to the laws of England, the first oath bound the citizen to obey the Court only while they adhered to the charter; but the new oath required submission to all the "wholesome" acts of the government, who were, of course, the sole judges of the wholesomeness of their own measures. Mr. Cotton says, that the oath was only *offered*, not imposed, but it was, by a subsequent act of the Court, enforced on every man above the age of sixteen years, on penalty of punishment at the discretion of the Court.†

To this oath, under such circumstances, Mr. Williams, as a friend of liberty, was opposed. He would not re-

* Tenet Washed, pp. 28, 29. † Backus, vol. i, p. 62.

nounce an oath which he had taken, and substitute another, which bound him to obey whatever laws the magistrates might deem wholesome. The reason assigned for the new oath, moreover, was to guard against "Episcopal and malignant practices." This gave it the appearance of a law to restrain liberty of conscience; and Mr. Williams' principles were totally opposed to any measure which tended to that result, however specious its professed object might be.

If these views are correct, Mr. Williams' opposition to oaths in this case resolves itself into an inflexible adherence to his great doctrine of unfettered religious liberty; a doctrine which, more than any thing else, drew upon him the jealousy and dislike of the magistrates and the clergy.

In July, he was again summoned to Boston.

"1635, Mo. 5, 8. At the General Court, Mr. Williams, of Salem, was summoned and did appear. It was laid to his charge, that being under question before the magistracy and churches for divers dangerous opinions, viz: 1. that the magistrate ought not to punish the breach of the first table, otherwise than in such cases as did disturb the civil peace; 2. that he ought not to tender an oath to an unregenerate man; 3. that a man ought not to pray with such, though wife, child, &c.; 4. that a man ought not to give thanks after the sacrament, nor after meat, &c.; and that the other churches were about to write to the church of Salem to admonish him of these errors; notwithstanding, the church had since called him to [the] office of teacher. Much debate was about these things. The said opinions were adjudged by all, magistrates and ministers, (who were desired to be present) to be erroneous and very dangerous, and that the calling of him to office, at that time, was judged a great contempt of authority. So, in fine, time was given to him and the church of Salem to consider of these things till the next General Court, and then either to give satisfaction to the Court, or else to expect the sentence; it being professedly declared by the ministers (at the request of the Court to give their advice) that he who should obstinately maintain such opinions (whereby a church might run into heresy, apostacy, or tyranny, and yet the civil magistrate could not intermeddle) were to be removed, and that the other churches ought to request the magistrates so to do." Vol. i. p. 162.

The first two of these charges have been considered. It will be observed, that the Governor has candidly acknowledged, that Mr. Williams allowed it to be right for the civil magistrate to punish breaches of the first table, when they disturbed the civil peace. This fact exempts him from the charge of opposition to the civil authority.

The third charge, if it is a true representation of the opinion of Mr. Williams, shows that his judgment in this particular was biased, by an idea of the impropriety of uniting in religious worship with those who cannot cordially participate in the service. He thus carried to an extreme a principle, which the state of things in England had frequently called into exercise. He probably recollected, that the book of common prayer implied that all present adopted the petitions as their own; and as he knew that many who pretended to join in the worship were notoriously profligate, he might be impelled to the opposite error.*

*In his "Hireling Ministry none of Christ's," he says, on this subject, "we may hinder and harden poor souls against repentance, when, by fellowship in prayer with them as with saints, we persuade them of their [already] blessed state of Christianity, and that they are new born, the sons and daughters of the living God." p. 22. This argument is unsound, because we do not "hold fellowship" with the impenitent, by praying in their presence; but the argument shows Mr. Williams' conscientious regard for the welfare of men.

It is worthy of remark, here, that while Winthrop states this charge as a general proposition, Hubbard (207) and Morton (153) assert, that Mr. Williams refused to "pray or give thanks at meals with his own wife or any of his family." This was probably an inference from Mr. Williams' abstract doctrine. Several of the charges against him might be thus traced to the disposition to draw inferences. A curious instance is given by Cotton Mather, (Magnalia, b. vii. ch. ii. § 6.) Mr. Williams, he says, "complained in open Court, that he was wronged by a slanderous report, as if he held it unlawful for a father to call upon his child to eat his meat. Mr. Hooker, then present, being moved hereupon to speak something, replied, "Why, you will say as much again, if you stand to your own principles, or be driven to say nothing at all." Mr. Williams expressing his confidence that he should never say it, Mr. Hooker proceeded: "If it be unlawful to call an unregenerate person to pray, since it is an action of God's worship, then it is unlawful for your unregenerate child to pray for a blessing upon his own meat. If it be unlawful for him to pray for a blessing upon his meat, it is unlawful for him to eat it, for it is sanctified by prayer, and without prayer unsanctified. (1 Tim. iv. 4, 5.) If it be unlawful for him to eat it, it is unlawful for you to call upon him to eat it, for it is unlawful for you to call upon him to sin." Our fathers were adepts in

The fourth charge seems too frivolous for notice. What right have men to insist on ceremonies which the Bible does not enjoin, and which are in themselves indifferent? If, as is not improbable,* there was an attempt to introduce among the churches a uniformity touching these little observances, it is not wonderful that Mr. Williams resisted them. He had seen too much of this system in England, to be willing to submit to it in America.

As the Salem church adhered to Mr. Williams, notwithstanding the well-known displeasure of the magistrates and the clergy, a singular mode of punishing them for their contumacy was soon adopted. Three days after the session of the Court just mentioned, we are told by Winthrop, that the "Salem men had preferred a petition at the last General Court, for some land in Marblehead Neck, which they did challenge as belonging to their town; but, because they had chosen Mr. Williams their teacher, while he stood under question of authority, and so offered contempt to the magistrates, &c. their petition was refused till, &c. Upon this the church of Salem write to other churches to admonish the magistrates of this as a heinous sin, and likewise the deputies; for which, at the next General Court, their deputies were not received until they should give satisfaction about the letter." Vol. i. p. 164.

Here is a candid avowal, that justice was refused to Salem, on a question of civil right, as a punishment for the conduct of the church and pastor. A volume could not more forcibly illustrate the danger of a connection between the civil and ecclesiastical power. The land, in question, was granted, after Mr. Williams was banished. The

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logic. Mr. Hooker's syllogisms do not now seem very convincing, but they must have puzzled Mr. Williams, if he held the notions ascribed to him. Accordingly, Cotton Mather adds, that "Mr. Williams chose to hold his peace, rather than to make any answer." We may wonder, nevertheless, that Mr. Williams has not been accused of starving his children, to the horror of succeeding generations!

* The Court, in March, 1634–5, passed an act, "entreating of the brethren and elders of every church within their jurisdiction, that they will consult and advise of one *uniform* order of discipline in the churches, agreeable to the Scriptures, and then to consider how far the magistrates are bound to interpose for the preservation of that uniformity and the peace of the churches."

postponement was evidently designed, and probably had some effect, to induce the people of Salem to consent to their pastor's removal.

The church at Salem felt this to be a flagrant wrong, and they naturally wrote to the other churches, to warn them of this dangerous attack upon their liberty, and to request them to admonish the magistrates, as members of the churches, of the criminality of their conduct. It is difficult to see, why the church at Salem were not fully justified in this procedure.

The health of Mr. Williams failed under the pressure of his trials and duties. He declared, "that his life was in danger, by his excessive labors, preaching thrice a week, by labors night and day in the field; and by travels night and day, to go and come from the Court." We need not be surprised, therefore, at the next notice of him by Winthrop, under the date of August 16:

"Mr. Williams, pastor of Salem, being sick and not able to speak, wrote to his church a protestation, that he could not communicate with the churches in the Bay; neither would he communicate with them, except they would refuse communion with the rest: but the whole church was grieved herewith." Vol. i. p. 166.

Solomon has said, that "oppression maketh a wise man mad;"* and it is not wonderful that it should impel a sick man to write such a letter as the one here alluded to. Mr. Williams felt deeply that he had been injured, and that the spiritual fellowship between him and the churches had suffered a melancholy interruption. He therefore declared, that he could not commune with them, and he insisted that the church in Salem should refuse such a communion. In this conduct he was doubtless wrong, yet who will venture to say, that if he had been placed in the situation of Mr. Williams, he would have maintained a more subdued spirit?

Matters now rapidly approached a crisis. The magistrates punished with rigor the offence of the Salem church, or rather of Mr. Williams, in writing the letter to the other churches. Mr. Endicott was committed, for justifying that letter, and was not discharged, till he acknowledged his offence. The following extract from the records of the Court shows a case, which savours much of the English Court of

* Ecclesiastes, vii. 7.

High Commission: "Mr. Samuel Sharpe is enjoined to appear at the next Particular Court, to answer for the letter that came from the church of Salem, as also *to bring the names of those that will justify the same*, or else to acknowledge his offence, under his own hand, for his own particular."*

In October, Mr. Williams was called before the Court for the last time:

"At this General Court, Mr. Williams, the teacher of Salem, was again convented, and all the ministers in the Bay being desired to be present, he was charged with the said two letters, that to the churches, complaining of the magistrates for injustice, extreme oppression, &c. and the other to his own church, to persuade them to renounce communion with all the churches in the Bay, as full of antichristian pollution, &c. He justified both these letters, and maintained all his opinions; and, being offered further conference or disputation, and a month's respite, he chose to dispute presently. So Mr. Hooker was chosen to dispute with him, but could not reduce him from any of his errors. So, the next morning, the Court sentenced him to depart out of our jurisdiction within six weeks, all the ministers, save one, approving the sentence; and his own church had him under question also for the same cause; and he, at his return home, refused communion with his own church, who openly disclaimed his errors, and wrote an humble submission to the magistrates, acknowledging their fault in joining with Mr. Williams in that letter to the churches against them," &c. Vol. i. p. 171.

The sentence was in these terms: "Whereas Mr. Roger Williams, one of the elders of the church of Salem, hath broached and divulged divers new and dangerous opinions, against the authority of magistrates; as also writ letters of defamation, both of the magistrates and churches here, and that before any conviction, and yet maintaineth the same without any retractation; it is therefore ordered, that the said Mr. Williams shall depart out of this jurisdiction within six weeks now next ensuing, which, if he neglect to perform, it shall be lawful for the Governor and two of the magis-

* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 167, Note.

trates to send him to some place out of this jurisdiction, not to return any more without license from the Court."*

The conduct of the church at Salem is to be ascribed to the severe measures of the magistrates, rather than to hostility to Mr. Williams. Many of them accompanied or followed him in his exile. Neal, in his History of New-England, acknowledges, that when he was banished, "the whole town of Salem was in an uproar, for he was esteemed an honest, disinterested man, and of popular talents in the pulpit."

Mr. Williams received permission to remain at Salem till spring, but because he would not refrain, *in his own house*, from uttering his opinions, the Court resolved to send him to England, in order to remove, as far as possible, the infection of his principles. Happily for themselves, and for the country, their design was defeated.

"11 mo. January. The Governor and Assistants met at Boston to consider about Mr. Williams, for that they were credibly informed, that, notwithstanding the injunction laid upon him (upon the liberty granted him to stay till the spring,) not to go about to draw others to his opinions, he did use to entertain company in his house, and to preach to them, even of such points as he had been censured for; and it was agreed to send him into England by a ship then ready to depart. The reason was, because he had drawn above twenty persons to his opinion, and they were intended to erect a plantation about the Narraganset Bay, from whence the infection would easily spread into these churches, (the people being many of them much taken with the apprehension of his godliness.) Whereupon a warrant was sent to him to come presently to Boston to be shipped, &c. He returned answer (and divers of Salem came with it,) that he could not come without hazard of his life, &c. Whereupon a pinnace was sent with commission to Capt. Underhill, &c. to apprehend him, and carry him aboard the ship, (which then rode at Nantasket;) but, when they came at his house, they found he had been gone three days before; but whither they could not learn.

"He had so far prevailed at Salem, as many there, (especially of devout women) did embrace his opinions, and se-

* Winthrop places the banishment under the date of October, but the Colonial Records, (I. 163) state, that it took place November 3, 1635.

parated from the churches, for this cause, that some of their members, going into England, did hear the ministers there, and when they came home the churches here held communion with them." Vol. i. p. 175.

Mr. Williams had received notice of the design of the Court, and had left Salem, in quest of a quiet refuge in the neighborhood of Narraganset Bay. It appears, that Governor Winthrop had privately advised him to leave the colony, as a measure, which the public peace required, and by which the personal interests of Mr. Williams might ultimately be best promoted. The good of the Indians, also, was a motive which operated on both their minds. Mr. Williams says, in a letter which has already been quoted: "It pleased the Most High to direct my steps into this Bay, by the loving private advice of the ever honored soul, Mr. John Winthrop, the grandfather, who, though he were carried with the stream for my banishment, yet he tenderly loved me to his last breath." The same fact is asserted, in the letter to Major Mason,* and the advice of Governor Winthrop is ascribed to "many high, and heavenly, and public ends." The friendship of the Governor was manifested on various occasions, and he afterwards united with Mr. Williams in the purchase of the island of Prudence in Narraganset Bay.

The removal, however, if it might on general grounds have been expedient, was not now optional. Without considering the justice or injustice of his banishment, there was certainly great hardship in being forced from his home in the middle of winter. His second daughter was born in the latter part of October, 1635,† and was consequently an infant less than three months old, while his eldest child was but a little more than two years of age. The mother and her two infants he left behind. His house and land at Salem he mortgaged, to raise money for the supply of his wants.‡

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* See Appendix C.

† Backus, vol. i. p. 516. He called this daughter Freeborn. This was in the taste of the times. The first three children christened in Boston church were named Joy, Recompense and Pity. It is worthy of remark, that the name Freeborn was given, while the father was the object of what he doubtless thought oppression. It shows his indomitable spirit.

‡ MSS. Letter.

With a heavy heart must this exiled husband and father, and this affectionate pastor, have parted from his family and flock, and plunged into the wilderness, to endure the wintry storms, and to try the hospitality of the savages.

We have thus briefly examined the reasons assigned by the mild and candid Winthrop for the expulsion of Mr. Williams from Massachusetts. We have seen, that these reasons related almost entirely to opinions, which the magistrates thought to be dangerous, and which the clergy opposed as tending to schism. It is satisfactory to observe, however, that these opinions did not refer to any of the great principles of the Gospel. The religious doctrines which Mr. Williams preached before his banishment were the same as those of Cotton and Hooker. He was not accused, while at Plymouth or at Salem, of any deviation from the established principles of the churches, on points of faith, much less was there any impeachment of his moral character. It is confessed, by the most bitter of his opponents, that both at Plymouth and at Salem, he was respected and beloved, as a pious man, and able minister.

What was there, then, it may be inquired, in the opinions of Mr. Williams, which was so offensive to the rulers in church and state? His denial of the right to possess the lands of the Indians without their own consent, needed not to disturb the colonists, for they purchased their lands from the natives. His ideas of the unlawfulness of oaths, and of the impropriety of praying with unregenerate persons, and other harmless notions of this kind, were surely too unimportant to excite the fears and provoke the ire of the government. We are led to the conclusion, that the cause of Mr. Williams' banishment is to be found in the great principle which has immortalized his name, that THE CIVIL POWER HAS NO JURISDICTION OVER THE CONSCIENCE. This noble doctrine, which the Scriptures clearly teach, and which reason itself proclaims, was, at that time, viewed, by most men, to be as heterodox, in morals, as the Copernican theory was considered by the Inquisition to be false in philosophy; and he who maintained it was liable to the fate of Galileo. The Papists abhorred it, for it would have subverted the Papal throne. The English Church rejected it, for it would have wrested from the hierarchy its usurped authority, and led the Church away from the throne of an earthly

monarch to the footstool of the King of kings, as her only head and sovereign. The Puritans themselves disowned it, for they were so firmly convinced of the truth of their doctrines, that they deemed him, who was so obstinate as not to embrace them, to be worthy of punishment for acting in opposition to his own conscience.* They refused to conform to the ceremonies of the English Church, but it was because they believed those ceremonies to be idolatrous, and not because they denied to men the power to enforce the belief of doctrines and the practice of rites. They opposed the Prelates, but they believed that a similar sway might be safely intrusted to their own hands. They resisted and for a while triumphed over the Lords Bishops, but they forgot that the despotism of the Lords Brethren, as Blackstone termed them, might be quite as intolerable. They did not understand the nature of that liberty which the Gospel bestows. They were misled by the analogies which they drew from the Mosaic institutions, and felt it to be their duty to extirpate heresy, with as unsparing rigor, as the Jews were required to exercise against those who despised or violated their ritual.

The character of the Puritans has been greatly misunderstood on this point, and there has been much commonplace declamation respecting their bigotry and inconsistency in persecuting others, after having suffered persecution themselves. But a candid mind, which understands their principles, will not, while it must lament and condemn their conduct, use the language of harsh censure. They were so far from believing, that liberty of conscience in religious concerns ought to be extended to all men, that they regarded toleration as a crime. They argued, that they ought to promote truth, and oppose error, by all the methods in their power. If they were able to suppress false doctrines, it was, they believed, a solemn duty to God to employ force, if necessary, for their suppression. They thought, that he who permitted error to be believed and preached, was chargeable with a participation in the guilt. Intolerance became, in their view, a paramount duty to God and to the heretic himself; and the greater their love of God and of

* This is the ground on which Mr. Cotton himself justified the punishment of heretics. See the "Bloody Tenet."

truth, the greater was their zeal to extirpate, with a strong hand, every noxious weed from the garden of the Lord.* It was not, therefore, a bigoted preference merely for their own views which made them persecute others, but a conviction that they only embraced the truth, and that all opposing doctrines were pernicious, and must not be allowed. It was not, in their judgment, inconsistent to act thus towards others, after having themselves endured persecution; for they regarded themselves as having been sufferers for the truth, and they were urged, by these very sufferings, to be more faithful in upholding that truth, and suppressing what they deemed to be error. It is due to the Pilgrims to remember, that they acted from principles, erroneous certainly, and deplorable in their effects, but sincerely adopted and cherished in hearts which, nevertheless, glowed with love to God. The grand doctrine of LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE was then a portentous novelty, and it was the glory of Roger Williams, that he, in such an age, proclaimed it, defended it, suffered for it, and triumphantly established it.

The principles of Roger Williams stood in the atti-

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* "About the same time that Bossuet, the most illustrious champion of the Church of Rome, was engaged in maintaining, with all the force of his overwhelming eloquence, and inexhaustible ingenuity, that the sovereign was bound to use his authority in extirpating false religions from the state, the Scotch Commissioners in London were remonstrating, in the name of their national Church, against the introduction of a 'sinful and ungodly toleration in matters of religion;' whilst the whole body of the English Presbyterian Clergy, in their official papers, protested against the schemes of Cromwell's party, and solemnly declared, 'that they detested and abhorred toleration.' 'My judgment,' said Baxter, a man noted in his day for moderation, 'I have always freely made known. I abhor unlimited liberty or toleration of all.'—'Toleration,' said Edwards, another distinguished divine, 'will make the kingdom a chaos, a Babel, another Amsterdam, a Sodom, an Egypt, a Babylon. Toleration is the grand work of the Devil, his master-piece, and chief engine to uphold his tottering kingdom. It is the most compendious, ready, sure way to destroy all religion, lay all waste and bring in all evil. It is a most transcendent, catholic and fundamental evil. As original sin is the fundamental sin, having the seed and spawn of all sins in it, so toleration hath all errors in it, and all evils.' *Verplank's Discourses*, pp. 23, 24. Similar language was used in this country. The Rev. Mr. Ward, in his Simple Cobler of Agawam, written in 1647, utters his detestation of toleration, and says: "He that is willing to tolerate any religion, or decrepant way of religion, besides his own, unless it be in matters merely indifferent, either doubts of his own, or is not sincere in it."

tude of irreconcilable opposition to the system which the Pilgrims had established in New-England. They could not blend with it. They came into collision with it, at every point. We have accordingly seen, that Mr. Williams was continually at variance with the government, because their measures were adjusted to their settled policy, but were repugnant to his great doctrine. There could be no peace between them, unless he yielded, or they abandoned their system. He was firm, and they were unconvinced. They possessed the power, and they banished him; not so much to punish him, as to remove from the colony a man whose doctrines they believed to be wrong, whose influence they feared, and whom they could neither intimidate nor persuade to abandon his principles.

It is intimated by Dr. Bentley,* that the rivalry of Salem and Boston had some effect to induce a rigorous treatment of Mr. Williams. He had great influence in Salem. He had drawn thither some persons from Plymouth, and it was, perhaps, feared, that his popularity gave an importance to Salem, which might be prejudicial to the metropolis.

It is due to the principal actors in these scenes, to record the fact, of which ample evidence exists, that personal animosity had little, if any, share in producing the sentence of banishment. Towards Mr. Williams, as a Christian and a minister, there was a general sentiment of respect. Governor Winthrop was a generous friend to him throughout his life; and it is asserted by Dr. Bentley, that "had Governor Winthrop been at liberty to concur with Endicott, and not have been deterred by the competition of Boston and Salem, Williams would have lived and died at Salem."

Mr. Haynes was Governor at the time Mr. Williams was banished, and Mr. Winthrop lost for a while his salutary influence over the public councils.† He endeavored, at a subsequent period, to procure a repeal of the sentence of

* 1 His. Col. vi. p. 248.

† Mr. Haynes was preceded by Mr. Dudley, who was a stern man, and particularly opposed to toleration. He died soon after, with a copy of verses in his pocket, written with his own hand. The two following lines made a part of it:

"Let men of God in court and churches watch
"O'er such as do a toleration hatch."

Mr. Haynes also accused Governor Winthrop as too mild. Winthrop, vol. i. p. 178.

banishment against Mr. Williams; but a more rigid policy prevailed, and the founder of Rhode-Island continued till his death an outlaw from Massachusetts.

Mr. Cotton was, at that time, the most powerful man in the commonwealth; and well did his piety, learning and intrepid love of pure religion merit the respect and affections of the colonists. Whatever share he may have had in procuring the banishment of Mr. Williams,* it is certain, that there was no personal feud between them. They had been acquainted with each other in England, and had alike suffered from the intolerance of the Prelates. Mr. Cotton sincerely thought Mr. Williams' principles wrong, and dangerous to the church and the state. He felt it to be the duty of the government to protect the colony, by removing from it this source of peril. In the controversy which subsequently arose between Mr. Cotton and Mr. Williams, the latter uniformly spoke of Mr. Cotton in the most respectful terms;† a circumstance, which is the more remarkable, because at that day the style of polemic discussion was less decorous than it is at the present time, and disputants lavished upon each other, with unsparing virulence, the bitterest epithets of obloquy. While we lament, therefore, that a man of so many admirable qualities as Mr. Cotton, was misled by wrong views of religious liberty, and thus betrayed into intolerance, we owe it to his honorable fame to remember, that the best men are imperfect, and that no personal hostility inflamed his zeal.

We may express the verdict, which, at this distant period, all calm and fair minds will, it is presumed, pronounce: that Mr. Williams was unnecessarily scrupulous about some minor points of conduct and of policy, though these scruples may be candidly traced to the agitated condition of

* Mr. Cotton denied, in his Reply to the Bloody Tenet, that he had any agency in the banishment of Mr. Williams, but avowed that he approved of it. Mr. Williams asserts, "Some gentlemen who consented to the sentence against me, solemnly testified with tears, that they did it by the advice and counsel of Mr. Cotton." These two assertions may be reconciled, perhaps, by the remark of Mr. Cotton, that "if he did counsel one or two, it would not argue the act of the government."

† In the Bloody Tenet such phrases as these are repeatedly applied to Mr. Cotton: "I speak with honorable respect for the answerer"—"the worthy answerer"—"a man incomparably too worthy for such a service."

the public mind in England and America, and to his own delicacy of conscience; that he may have erred in maintaining his principles with too little of that meek patience which he who would effect a reform in the opinions of men must possess, though candor will admit, that the constant opposition which Mr. Williams encountered might have irritated a gentler spirit than his; that his behavior to the civil rulers was not indecorous, unless a firm opposition to what he considered as wrong in their measures might be viewed as indecorum, for he yielded to their authority, in every point which his conscience would allow; that his private character was pure; and that the cause of his banishment may be found, in his distinguishing doctrine, *that the civil power has no control over the religious opinions of men;* a doctrine which no man, in our country, would, at the present day, venture to deny. Mr. Williams was banished, therefore, because his spirit was too elevated and enlarged, for the community in which he lived. Like Aristides, the prominent excellence of his character was the cause of his banishment.

But the same impartial verdict will do justice to the Pilgrims. They felt it to be not merely their right, but their duty, to protect their theocracy from persons, whose opinions or conduct, in their judgment, disturbed its peace or endangered its purity. They believed, that the sword of the magistrate was to be used for the defence of the church, as in the days of Moses and Aaron. To deny this principle, was to subvert the foundation of their civil and religious institutions; and it became, in their opinion, a measure of self-preservation, and of paramount duty to God, to expel Mr. Williams from the colony. That the grounds of this measure were wrong, will not now be disputed; but we ought to rejoice, that we can ascribe it to a sincere, though misdirected, desire to uphold the church, and to advance the honor of God. Were these excellent men now alive, they would be foremost in lamenting their own error, and in vindicating those principles of religious liberty, for which Mr. Williams incurred their displeasure.

And we may on this occasion, as on many others, observe the wonderful wisdom of Divine Providence, which so controls the mistakes and sins of men, as to accomplish the

most important results. The banishment of Mr. Williams contributed in the end to his own happiness and fame. Another colony was established, and thus civilization and religion were diffused. And we shall soon see how this event, though springing from wrong views, and producing much immediate suffering, was the means, a few years after, of that interposition of Mr. Williams between the colonists and the Indians, which apparently rescued the whites throughout New-England from total destruction.

CHAPTER VI.

Numbers, condition, language, rights, &c. of the Indians in New-England.

The history of Roger Williams becomes, from this point, so closely connected with that of the Indians, as to make it necessary to present a brief sketch of their situation and character. We must confine our view to those who inhabited New-England. Mr. Williams himself has furnished us with valuable aid in this review. His Key to the Indian Languages, though its chief object was philology, presents many interesting details respecting the habits and general character of the aborigines.

The territory now comprehended within the limits of New-England was inhabited by various tribes, the principal of which were the following:

1. The *Pawtuckets*, whose territory extended from Salem, (Mass.) to Portsmouth, (N. H.,) being bounded by the ocean on the east, and by the Nipmuck country on the west.

2. The *Massachusetts*, who dwelt chiefly about the Bay, which bears their name.

3. The *Pokanokets*, who inhabited the territory of the old colony of Plymouth. This tribe included several subordinate tribes, among whom were the Wampanoags, the particular tribe of Massassoit and Philip.

4. The *Narragansets*, who inhabited nearly all the territory which afterwards formed the colony of Rhode-Island, including the islands in the Bay, Block-Island, and a part of Long-Island.

5. The *Pequods*, who inhabited the southern part of the present State of Connecticut. The Mohegans have been considered as a part of this tribe, inhabiting the western and northern parts of Connecticut.

These principal nations included many subordinate and tributary tribes, among whom may be mentioned the Nipmucks, who were scattered over the western parts of Massachusetts.

At a period not long preceding the arrival of the English, a pestilence prevailed among the natives, to so frightful an extent, that some of the tribes became nearly extinct. The Pawtuckets, who could previously raise three thousand fighting men, were almost exterminated. The Massachusetts, who were equally numerous, were so reduced, that they could not, probably, in 1630, have raised a hundred men. The Pokanokets were diminished to about five hundred warriors.* The Narragansets suffered little, and the Pequods were uninjured by the pestilence. Each of these tribes could raise four thousand fighting men.† The Pequods were the most fierce and warlike, and the Narragansets the most civilized, of the New-England savages.

The Indians, when most numerous, could occupy but a small portion of the territory. They subsisted chiefly by hunting, a mode of life which is impracticable except where extensive tracts remain in the wildness of nature. Their dwellings were usually built in small villages, rudely constructed of skins or bark, and easily removed, as their caprice or necessities required. The lands claimed by each tribe were held in common. Each member roamed over it at his pleasure, and took the game wherever he could find it. Their agriculture was limited to the cultivation of Indian corn, tobacco, and a few esculent vegetables, such as beans and squashes. The agricultural labor was performed by the women, with little skill, and rude implements. The product must consequently have been small. Game was not always plentiful, or was consumed with the improvident voracity of savages. They did not understand the art of salting provisions for future use. They often suffered from hunger, especially during the winter. They knew little of the medical art, and their diseases, though few, were fatal. Their wars were frequent and sanguinary. Their mode of life was unfavorable to the rearing of children. For these and other reasons, the native tribes could never have been very numerous; and if the Europeans had not landed here, the country over which our free and flourishing States have spread themselves would, it is probable, have been, at this

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*Baylies' History of Plymouth, vol. i. chap. 4.
† 2 His. Col. vol. ix. pp. 235, 236.

hour, a wilderness, the hunting ground of tribes not less savage, and, perhaps, little more numerous, than those whom our fathers found here.

The origin of the Indians is involved in impenetrable mystery. Their own traditions shed no light on the subject, and nothing has been found, in their customs or languages, which could lead to a satisfactory conclusion. Imagination has been active in tracing their connection with different nations. The favorite theory of many writers has been, that they are the descendants of the ten Jewish tribes; but this opinion is founded on the slight ground of a few coincidences between the customs of the Jews and those of the Indians, and fancied resemblances in some of their words to terms in the Hebrew language. Roger Williams wisely refrains from expressing any opinion on the subject, except by stating his confidence that the Indians have sprung from Adam and Noah. He mentions several Indian customs, which resemble Jewish rites, and says, "others (and myself) have conceived some of their words to hold affinity with the Hebrew." But he adds, "I have found a greater affinity of their language with the Greek tongue."* The natives themselves believed, that their great god Cautantowit made a man and woman of a stone, but disliking them, he broke them in pieces, and made another man and woman of a tree, from whom all mankind have descended.† The mounds and other monuments found in the western States, have been considered as evidences, that some people, superior to the Indians, once inhabited that part of the country. But who they were, and why they disappeared, we shall probably never know. The probability seems to be, that America was first inhabited by emigrants from Asia, who crossed from the one continent to the other, at some point near the northwestern extremity of America. But conjecture is useless. That the Indians have descended from Adam, no one who reverences the Bible will doubt. That they are of a kindred nature with other men is proved, both by their virtues and their vices. Their minds are acknowledged, by all who have known them well, to be fully equal in strength and acuteness to those of civilized men. That they are capable of

* Key, Introduction. † Key, ch. 21.

becoming pious Christians, has happily been demonstrated by many cheering examples.

Their government was very simple. A wild freedom prevailed among them, and their roving habits did not permit much control. They needed, however, some rulers in peace, and leaders in war. Each tribe had one or more chiefs, called sachems, who were, at first, chosen by the tribe, or who gained the ascendency, by superior wisdom or courage. Some of these sachems inherited and transmitted their power, by hereditary right; but it is probable, that the incumbent owed his authority more to his personal qualities than to his birth.* The sachems held nominally the supreme power, and received tribute, but they were controlled by the wisdom of the aged men, and by the fierce energy of the young warriors. "The sachems," says Roger Williams,† "although they have an absolute monarchy over the people, yet they will not conclude of aught that concerns all, either laws, or subsidies, or wars, unto which the people are averse, and by gentle persuasion cannot be brought." There were subordinate chiefs, sometimes called sagamores, who held a limited authority over portions of the tribes. All important questions were discussed in councils, where eloquence was as fervid and efficacious, probably, as in the more polished assemblies of Greece.

The physical characteristics of the Indians were common to all the tribes,—a bronze or copper color; straight, coarse, black hair, hazel eyes, high cheek bones, and an erect form.‡ They possessed firm, well compacted bodies, capable of enduring the greatest hardships and fatigues, and regardless of cold, while travelling in the severity of winter.§ They were very active, and could run vast distances with astonishing speed and endurance.‖ They could subsist for

* The remark of Tacitus, respecting the German tribes, is true of the Indians: "Reges ex nobilitate, Duces ex virtute sumunt. Nec Regibus infinita aut libera potestas, et Duces exemplo potius quam imperio; si prompti, si conspicui, si ante aciem agant, admiratione præsunt." De Mor. Ger. c. vii.

† Key, ch. 22. ‡ Encyclopædia Americana, art. Indians.

§ Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 411.

‖ Roger Williams says, "I have known many of them run between fourscore or an hundred miles in a summer's day, and back in two days." Key, ch. 11.

many days on a little parched corn, pounded into meal. "This," says Roger Williams, "is a very wholesome food, which they eat with a little water, hot or cold. I have travelled with near two hundred of them at once, near one hundred miles through the woods, each man carrying a little basket of this at his back, and sometimes in a hollow leather girdle about his middle, sufficient for a man for three or four days. With this ready provision, and their bow and arrow, are they ready for war and travel at a moment's warning. With a spoonful of this meal and a spoonful of water from the brook, have I made many a good dinner and supper."* When they had leisure, however, and a plentiful supply of food, they would compensate themselves for their abstinence, by eating enormous quantities. Their cookery was simple, their meat or fish being boiled or roasted, and eaten without salt or bread. Indian corn, boiled, either whole or when ground, was a common dish.† Their only drink was water, until Europeans introduced among them the devouring curse of spirituous liquors. Tobacco was in general use, as a remedy for the toothache, and as a stimulant, of which they were as fond as their civilized successors.

Their diseases were few, but neglect or injudicious treatment made them very destructive. The chief remedy was sweating, in a cave or cell, made hot with heated stones. In this cell the patient remained an hour or more, and then plunged into a river. Roger Williams expended much time and money in administering to the sick among the Indians, and he expressed his confidence, that millions of the natives had perished for want of suitable aid. Infectious diseases sometimes seized them, and made terrific ravages. The living fled, and whole towns were deserted. The powaws, or priests, pretended to much skill in curing diseases; but their medical practice consisted mainly of hideous bellowings, incantations, and other fantastic ceremonies.

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* Key, ch. 2.

† When boiled whole it was called msickquatash, and it is still eaten in New-England, under the name of suckatash. The ground corn, when boiled, was called Nasaump. "From this," says Roger Williams, "the English call their *samp*, which is the Indian corn, beaten and boiled, and eaten hot or cold with milk or butter, which are mercies beyond the natives' plain water, and which is a dish exceeding wholesome for the English bodies." Key, ch. 2.

Their domestic habits were not favorable to happiness or virtue. The marriage relation was formed with little care, and was dissolved at the pleasure of the husband. A man might have as many wives as he chose, and was able to purchase from their parents. The women were treated with rigor. They were forced to perform the labors of agriculture, and to carry the provisions and packs of every kind, in their huntings and marches. The parents permitted their children to grow up without restraint, and the children were undutiful, and often cruel to their parents.

The Indians were hospitable to strangers. They were grateful for benefits, and were firm friends; but their resentment of injuries was fierce and implacable. They pursued an enemy with the malignity of fiends, and they usually murdered their captives, with prolonged and shocking tortures. They met death, even when thus inflicted, with the utmost composure, disdaining to exhibit any symptoms of fear or pain, and often provoking their tormentors by scornful taunts. They were treacherous, prone to lying, and indolent, except when war or hunting roused them to action. They were fond of sports, and like the Germans, as described by Tacitus, they were addicted to gaming.

They had no commerce, except the sale of corn, skins, and some other articles, to the Europeans. Their only money consisted of shells, sewed together on strips of cloth, and thus forming belts of various lengths, and different degrees of beauty, according to the taste of the maker. This money, as described by Roger Williams, "was of two sorts: one white, which they make of the stem or stock of the periwincle, which they call meteauhock, when all the shell is broken off; and of this sort, six of their small beads (which they make with holes to string the bracelets) are current with the English for a penny. The second is black, inclining to blue, which is made of the shell of a fish which the English call hens, poquauhock,* and of this sort three make an English penny." The white money was

* This shell fish is now called quahawg. The blue part of the shell seems to have been broken off, drilled, ground to a round, smooth surface, and polished. It appears that the white parts of the quahawg shell were in like manner made into wampum. Morton's Memorial, Appendix, p. 388.

called wampum, which signified white. The other was called suckauhock, a word signifying black. Both kinds seem to have been called wampum, or wampumpeag. The Narraganset Indians were reputed the most skilful coiners of wampum, and the most ingenious manufacturers of pendants, bracelets, stone tobacco pipes, and earthen vessels for cooking and other domestic uses.* They were, as a cause, or perhaps as a consequence, more civilized and less warlike than their neighbors.† The Pequods insulted them, with the contemptuous title of a nation of women. It is a coincidence worthy of remark, that Rhode-Island, where this primitive nation of manufacturers resided, is distinguished as the place where the manufacture of cotton was commenced in this country, and where this, and its kindred arts, have been cultivated with great success. The history of Rhode-Island, however, shows that her sons have not been deficient in martial qualities. If the sarcasm of the Pequods was deserved by the Narragansets, it has no application to those who now occupy the beautiful islands, the streams, the hills and the plains, from which this hapless tribe have disappeared forever.

The wars of the Indians were frequent. They were conducted in a desultory manner, with all the arts of savage cunning. Their weapons were bows and arrows, clubs, and rude spears. Their arrows were headed with sharp, triangular pieces of stone, many of which are found at the present day. After the arrival of the English, the arrow heads were made of brass, and an iron hatchet being added to the club, formed the dreaded tomahawk. The Indians soon learned the value of fire arms. Though the sale of muskets and of powder to the Indians was forbidden by the colonists, yet the natives, obtaining a supply from the Dutch, and from unprincipled traders, speedily rivalled the Europeans in the skilful use of these instruments of death.

The religion of the Indians was vague and shadowy.

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* Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 406.

† The remark of Lord Bacon is applicable to the native tribes of our land. "It is certain, that sedentary and within door arts, and delicate manufactures (that require rather the finger than the arm) have in their nature a contrariety to a warlike disposition; and generally all warlike people are a little idle, and love danger better than travail." Essay 29.

They had no images, but they worshipped a number of deities. Roger Williams said, that he had heard the names of thirty-seven gods, to whom they rendered some religious homage. They acknowledged, however, one superior being, named Cautantowit, as the creator of men, and the giver of their corn and other temporal benefits. They believed that Cautantowit resided in the southwest,* in a delightful region, to which the souls of good men went after death, and enjoyed fruitful fields, placid streams, abundant game, and every thing else which an Indian's imagination could conceive as necessary to happiness. The souls of wicked men, as they believed, would wander, without rest.† The separate existence and immortality of the soul, and an endless state of retribution, according to the deeds done in the body, were prominent doctrines in the narrow creed of these rude savages. These doctrines are found among almost all nations; and their prevalence can be satisfactorily explained only by supposing that they are derived from the original revelation, and preserved, by tradition, as well as by their accordance with the reason and instincts of mankind.

The Indians had priests, who directed their worship. This consisted in little more than occasional prayers, dances and feasts. Their religion had little influence over their minds, as an incentive to virtue, or as a source of consolation. They lived in gross darkness, and died without hope. Though Eliot, Roger Williams, and others, labored for their spiritual welfare, with some success,‡ yet the great

* They supposed that their elysium was situated in the southwest, because the wind from that quarter is always the attendant or precursor of fine weather. It was not unnatural for an ignorant savage to imagine, that the balmy and delightful breezes from the southwest were "airs from heaven."

† Key, ch. 21.

‡ The Rev. John Eliot, called the Indian apostle, was settled as the teacher of the church in Roxbury, in 1632. He learned the Indian language, and commenced preaching to the natives. In 1651, an Indian town was built, on a pleasant spot on Charles river, about 16 miles from Boston, and called Natick. A house of worship was erected, and a church of converted Indians was formed, in 1660. In 1661, he published the New Testament, in the Indian language, and in a few years after, the whole Bible, and several other books. His labors for the welfare of the natives were very great, and his success was gratifying. In 1670, there were between 60 and 70 praying

mass of the tribes went into eternity without a knowledge of the Saviour. It is melancholy to reflect, that multitudes of these immortal beings died, in all their darkness, after the glorious Gospel had begun to shed its radiance over these hills and vallies. Our fathers desired and attempted their conversion, but their efforts were baffled, by many adverse causes. Let us, at this late day, endeavor to lead the feeble remnants of these departed nations to the great Bishop of souls.

The languages of the Indians are among the wonders of philology. They have been studied, with ardor and success, by many scholars in our own country, and by a few scientific men abroad.* These languages, instead of being rude and scanty, as might be inferred from the character of the Indians, are found to be astonishingly regular and copious, rich in forms, and possessing a facility of combination, and a nice discrimination in their inflections, which are scarcely surpassed even by the ancient Greek.† Mr.

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communicants. The example of Eliot was followed by others, especially by the Mayhews, who labored among the Indians on Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. Many churches were formed in various places besides Natick, schools established, books printed, and other efforts made for the welfare of the natives. The aggregate number of praying Indians, in 1674, has been estimated as follows:

In Massachusetts, principally under Mr. Eliot's care,	1100
In Plymouth, under Mr. Bourne,	530
In Plymouth, under Mr. Cotton,	170
On the island of Nantucket,	300
On Martha's Vineyard and Chappequiddick, under the Mayhews,	1500
	3600

See Morton's Memorial, note U, p. 407, and Qu. Register of the Am. Ed. Soc. for Feb. 1832. Adams' Bio. Dic. art. Eliot and Mayhew.

*The illustrious Professors Adelung and Vater, and Baron Humboldt, deserve a special mention. They are the authors of that astonishing work, the Mithridates.

†The Cherokee language exceeds even the Greek in its power to express, by the inflection of a single word, delicate modifications of thought. An example is given in the Appendix to the 6th volume of the Encyclopædia Americana. It is also a specimen of the length to which the words in the Indian languages are often extended. The word is, Winitaw'tigeginaliskawlungtanawneli'tisesti, which may be rendered, "They will by that time have nearly done granting [favors] from a distance to thee and to me." This word is un-

Du Ponceau, of Philadelphia, who has studied the native dialects with great diligence and with philosophical acumen, says, "I confess that I am lost in astonishment at the copiousness and admirable structure of their languages; for which I can only account by looking up to the Great First Cause."* He says, of the Delaware language, "it would rather appear to have been formed by philosophers in their closets, than by savages in the wilderness."

The languages and dialects spoken on the continent of America, have been estimated by the authors of the Mithridates, at the astonishing number of *twelve hundred and fourteen.*† A large proportion of these, however, are only variations of a few parent languages, just as the English language is varied in different counties in England by peculiarities, which are scarcely intelligible in other parts of the island. The French language is, in the same way, corrupted by the *patois* of different sections of the country. Unwritten languages are, of course, still more liable to variations, which, in time, would make a distinct dialect.

All the native languages of North America have been reduced to four classes: 1. The Karalit, or language of Greenland, and the Esquimaux. 2. The Delaware. 3. The Iroquois. 4. The Floridian, comprehending the body of languages spoken on the whole southern frontier of the United States.‡

The dialects spoken in New-England are believed to have been varieties of the Delaware language.§ Roger Williams affirms of the Narraganset tongue, that "with this I have entered into the secrets of those countries wherever English dwell, about two hundred miles, between the French and Dutch plantations. There is a mixture of this language north and south from the place of my abode about six hundred miles; yet, within the two hundred miles aforesaid, their dialects do exceedingly differ, yet not so but (within

derstood to be regularly inflected, according to fixed rules. If so, the Cherokee language must have an arrangement of modes, tenses and numbers, which few if any other languages on earth can equal.

* 2 His. Col. ix. 227.

† The number assigned, in the same work, to Europe, is 587; to Africa, 276; to Asia, 987. Total, in the world, 3064.

‡ 2 His. Col. ix. 233, 234.

§ Heckewelder and Edwards assert this fact.

that compass) a man may by this help converse with thousands of natives all over the country."* The Massachusetts language, into which Eliot translated the Bible, was radically the same tongue as the Narraganset.

Roger Williams published the first vocabulary of an Indian language. His book attracted attention, when first published, in 1643, and it is still much valued. We shall have occasion to recur to it. Eliot wrote a Grammar of the Massachusetts language. The son of President Edwards wrote a brief account of the Mohegan language. The Hon. Josiah Cotton, a descendant of the great John Cotton, compiled a vocabulary of the Massachusetts dialect. These and other valuable papers on the native languages, have been published in the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society. They are worthy of the attention of every man who loves to study the human mind, and who feels an interest in the character of the Indians.

We will now offer a few remarks on a subject which has already been touched, the rights of the Indians, and the treatment which they received from the colonists. It is a topic of deep interest, which affects the character of our fathers, and to which recent events and the present condition of the surviving Indians have attracted earnest attention.

The right of the natives to hold the possession and control of all the territory on this continent has been a subject of dispute. The general principles applicable to this case, as expounded by Vattel, are these:† God has given the earth to the human race, and every man is entitled to a portion of its surface, sufficient for the comfortable support of himself and family. The actual occupancy of such a portion gives to the occupant a title which no man can rightfully disturb. But no one has an original right to appropriate to himself more than he needs, because he may thus deprive others, who possess equal rights with himself, of their appropriate share. Nor can he justly adopt a mode of subsistence, which will necessarily require so large an extent of territory, as to deprive his fellow men of their proportion, and either prevent the increase of the human race,

* Key, introduction.

† Vattel's Law of Nations, book i. sections 81 and 209.

or produce in other places an accumulation of masses of men, too great to be comfortably sustained. That the cultivation of the earth was designed by the Creator to be the chief means of subsistence to the human family, cannot be doubted; because the increase of the race was certainly his purpose,* and agriculture is the only mode by which a dense population could every where be supported. It follows, that a man has no right to claim for himself a vast tract of forest, because he chooses to subsist by hunting. If all other men cannot have a similar tract, he must, himself, become a cultivator, and thus subsist on a small portion of land. If a man had appropriated to himself a large territory, which, by proper cultivation, would furnish subsistence for many others, those others, if their necessities required, would have a right to claim their share, and to enforce their claim.

These principles, in their application to a primitive society, just taking possession of a new territory, seem to be indisputable. They are the principles on which the land of Canaan was divided among the Jews, by the authority of God himself, and on which the colonists in this country generally proceeded, in dividing the territory which they acquired from the Indians.

In the progress of society, however, the balance soon becomes disturbed. Other modes of subsistence than agriculture are adopted, and various causes produce an accumulation of wealth in the hands of some men, while others are reduced to indigence. The peace of society requires, that the rich should be protected in their lawful possessions; though every civilized nation still acts on the principle, that every member of the community is entitled to a subsistence. He ought to earn it by his labor, but if sickness, or want of employment, or other reasonable causes, prevent, he is entitled to assistance from the community, and the rich are taxed for his support. The most strenuous opposer of poor laws will not deny, that a man, who cannot maintain himself, has a right to aid from his fellow citizens. Thus the original law of nature comes into operation, and the inequalities which arise are, in

* "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it." Genesis, i. 28.

some measure, compensated. But a fundamental principle of civilized society is, that every man is to be protected in the enjoyment of the property which he lawfully acquires. He may use it as he pleases, if he does not injure others; and he cannot be deprived of it, or of any part of it, without his own consent.

It is not easy to see, why the same principle should not be applied to the Indians. They had regular, though simple, governments, and the territories of each tribe were defined by boundaries sufficiently precise for their purposes. They had the best of all titles to their lands, actual possession. Why, then, might not the Indian claim to be protected in the enjoyment of his property? Why might he not make use of that property as he pleased, while he did not trespass on the rights of others? If the law of nations did not reach him, was he out of the pale of the great law of justice and reason? If it were said, that he had no right to appropriate to himself miles of forest, for a hunting ground, he might reply, that he had as good a right as an English nobleman has to appropriate to himself a vast space, for parks and fish ponds; and, indeed, a better right, by the law of nature, for every other Indian could enjoy as much land as himself, while the nobleman must see hundreds around him in abject poverty.

But it has been said, that the Creator could not have designed this vast and beautiful region to be exclusively inhabited by a few thousands of savage hunters; and, therefore, if the old world should become crowded with inhabitants, a portion of them would have a right to remove to America, and occupy a portion of it, as a part of the great inheritance of the human race. The Indians would consequently be bound to allow them a sufficient space; and if the numbers of both parties should so increase as to make hunting impracticable, the Indians ought to become cultivators.

If this theory were admitted as sound, the practical application of it would not be easy. The absolute necessity of emigration from the old world has not, perhaps, occurred, and yet this case must be made out, to justify an occupancy of a part of the Indian territory, without the consent of the natives. Immense tracts of uncultivated land exist in Europe, and even in England. Why would it not be as

just for a company of settlers to fix their dwellings in a nobleman's park, cut down his trees, and plant their corn, as to do the same on the lands of an Indian? If it were alleged, that the Indian had more land than he needed, the same might be said, perhaps, of the nobleman. At any rate, it might be asked, who was the proper judge, how much land an Indian needed?

But, looking at the actual state of things, at the settlement of this country, the necessities of the Pilgrims were sufficiently great, to make it the duty of the Indians to receive them hospitably, and allow them a portion of their lands. Where the country was deserted by the natives, the colonists might, undoubtedly, take possession. But wherever the Indians actually occupied the territory, even for the purposes of hunting, they were, clearly, the proprietors; and though it was doubtless their duty to cede to the Europeans a sufficient portion for their maintenance, yet they could not justly be forced to perform this duty. The settlers were bound to be satisfied with a sufficient amount of land for their comfortable support by agriculture and by the arts of civilized life. But the Indians retained an inviolable right to so much territory as they deemed necessary for their own use. Their title was beyond dispute. No power on earth could lawfully dispossess them.

We may conclude, then, that the Indians were the lawful proprietors of all the lands which they occupied. They were independent nations, and had a right to regulate their governments, and use their territory, as they pleased, while they respected the rights of others. They consequently could not be lawfully subjected to the sway of any other nation, without their own consent. No charters from popes or kings could give a right to take possession of the Indian territory. The Indians were nevertheless under an obligation to receive distressed Europeans, who sought their coasts, and to sell them land. They were, too, bound by the great law of God, which requires men to aspire after moral and physical perfection. This law obliged them to become civilized, and to adopt those modes of life which would enable their territory to support the greatest possible number of inhabitants. Hence arose another obligation to admit Europeans among them, who were capable of instructing and elevating them to the rank

of civilized, educated, Christian nations. The duties of the settlers were, to make a reasonable compensation for the land ceded; to respect the rights of the natives; to treat them with uniform kindness; to teach them the arts of civilization; and, above all, to inculcate the principles and the practice of the Christian religion.

It is pleasing to observe, in the history of the New-England colonists, that the duties of both parties were, to so great an extent, fulfilled. The Indians, in most cases, received the white men with generous hospitality; they sold them land, on easy terms; many tribes remained their firm friends; and some of the natives became converts to the Christian faith. The colonists, on the other hand, purchased their lands from the Indians, for such a compensation as satisfied the natives, and was a fair equivalent at that time.* They treated the Indians, generally, with

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*The patents which they brought with them were, in theory, unjust; for they implied, in terms, the absolute control of the English monarch over the ceded territory, and contained no recognition of the rights of the natives. But the Christian integrity of the Pilgrims corrected, in practice, the error or defect of the patents. An able writer says: "It is beyond all question, that the early settlers at Plymouth, at Saybrook, and, as a general rule, all along the Atlantic coast, purchased the lands upon which they settled, and proceeded in their settlements with the consent of the natives. Nineteen twentieths of the land in the Atlantic States, and nearly all the land settled by the whites in the western States, came into our possession as the result of amicable treaties." "The settlers usually gave as much for land as it was then worth, according to any fair and judicious estimate. An Indian would sell a square mile of land for a blanket and a jack-knife; and this would appear to many to be a fraudulent bargain. It would, however, by no means deserve such an appellation. The knife alone would add more to the comfort of an Indian, and more to his wealth, than forty square miles of land, in the actual circumstances of the case." See a very judicious article in the North American Review, for October, 1830. We may add, that, at this day, a square mile of land might be bought in some parts of the United States, for less than the first settlers paid the Indians for their lands. Indeed, as the writer just quoted says, "There are millions of acres of land in the Carolinas, which would not, at this moment, be accepted as a gift, and yet much of this land will produce, with very little labor, one hundred and fifty bushels of sweet potatoes to the acre." Vattel says, (book i. § 209) "We cannot help praising the moderation of the English puritans, who first settled in New-England, who, notwithstanding their being furnished with a charter from their sovereign, purchased of the Indians the

justice, and they made many zealous efforts for their conversion. That some of the proceedings of the colonists towards the Indians were not strictly equitable nor kind, must be admitted. Our fathers were too prone to view them rather as heathens than as men. They recurred too often to the Jewish history, for imaginary analogies; and drew unauthorized inferences from the conduct of the Jews towards idolatrous nations, whom God, the sovereign ruler, commanded them to destroy. In their wars with the natives, the colonists were sometimes unjustifiably severe; but it is due to their memory to say, that those wars were commenced by the savages themselves, from jealousy of the advancing power of the whites, rather than from the experience of actual injury. We must consider, too, that when the struggle came, it was, on the part of the whites, a contest for life and death, with an enemy vastly more numerous, and whose modes of warfare were treacherous, cruel, and terrific in the highest degree to the scattered and feeble settlements.*

A candid reader of our early colonial history, while he observes many things which he deeply regrets and condemns, must nevertheless admit, that the conduct of our fathers towards the Indians was, in general, worthy of their high character, as wise and pious, yet imperfect men, who were placed in circumstances which severely tried their principles, and amid difficulties, which required the utmost wisdom and courage. When we consider the diabolical cruelty with which the Spaniards treated the unhappy natives of South America, we must turn, with emotions of grateful pleasure, to the history of our own land, and rejoice, that our fathers were men, for whom their descendants have little occasion to blush, or to apologize.

The kings of England, whatever language they employed in their patents and charters, treated the Indians, in practice, as separate nations, and entered into treaties with different tribes. The government of the United

land they resolved to cultivate. This laudable example was followed by Mr. William Penn, who planted the colony of Quakers in Pennsylvania."

* The consternation which the war with Black Hawk spread over the western country the last year, may give some faint idea of the horrors of an Indian warfare in the early days of the colonies.

States have done the same, and, except in one humiliating instance, have pursued towards the natives a just and humane policy. The treaties so formed have been pronounced, by the highest legal authority in this country, to be binding on our government, and the rights of the Indians, as distinct nations, though under the protection of the United States, have thus been judicially recognised.*

That the Indian tribes in New-England melted away, must awaken melancholy feelings. But it cannot be maintained, that their disappearance was occasioned mainly by the treatment or the neglect which they experienced from the colonial governments. These governments could not wholly prevent unprincipled individuals from inflicting wrongs on the natives, which tended to exasperate them. They could not entirely exclude the introduction of ardent spirits, the most deadly and active agent in the destruction of the aborigines. Though they sent missionaries, and printed Bibles, and erected schools, for the religious and literary instruction of the natives, they could not reclaim any considerable proportion of them from their savage habits. As the whites increased, the game disappeared, and as the Indians did not alter their habits, they became destitute, and their numbers diminished. They saw, at length, the alternative, of utter ruin or the expulsion of the English, and they determined to attempt the latter. But it was too late. They fought, with desperation, and filled the land with frightful distress and bloodshed. But the superior skill of the whites prevailed, and the death of the formidable Philip terminated forever the power of the Indians in New-England. We may admit, that the savages were impelled by some motives of patriotism and love of liberty. We may respect and pity them. But surely we cannot lament that they failed; that their exterminating warfare did not accomplish its purpose; that the tomahawk did not, after butchering the last father in the field, smite the last infant in the cradle; that the flames did not lay in ashes every dwelling of civilized man and every temple of God; and that barbarism did not resume its dominion over the hills and vallies of New-England. No man, if he could

* See Opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States, at January term, 1832, in the Cherokee case.

do it by waving some potent wand, would bid all this teeming population, this wide spread happiness, this wonderful triumph of civilization, freedom and religion, disappear, like a gorgeous vision, and restore this whole land to the condition in which the Pilgrims found it, or even place it in the situation in which it would have been, at this moment, if no civilized man had landed on these shores. Human happiness has been immeasurably increased by the settlement of this continent. Christianity has extended her conquests; and no thoughtful man can doubt, that the landing of the Pilgrims, and the subsequent history of this country, have been controlled by Him, who accomplishes his great designs of mercy to the universe, by means which often involve individual suffering, and sometimes produce national ruin.

Let us feel our obligation to treat the feeble remnants of the tribes who yet remain with generous kindness. Let us recompense them for whatever wrongs their fathers may have received. Let us, now that they are weak, and we are strong, be scrupulously attentive to their rights, and seek to promote their highest temporal and eternal welfare. Without the friendship of their fathers, at the beginning, ours must have perished. Let the children of the white man prove their gratitude, by saving from ruin the helpless descendants of the savage.

CHAPTER VII.

Mr. Williams proceeds to Seekonk—crosses the river and founds the town of Providence.

About the middle of January, 1635–6,* Mr. Williams left Salem, in secrecy and haste. It is not certain, that any one accompanied him, though a number of persons were with him a short time afterwards. He proceeded to the south, towards the Narraganset Bay. The weather was very severe, and his sufferings were great. In a letter written thirty-five years afterwards, he said: "I was sorely tossed for one fourteen weeks, in a bitter winter season, not knowing what bread or bed did mean;" and he added, that he still felt the effects of his exposure to the severity of the weather.†

He appears to have visited Ousamequin, the sachem of Pokanoket, who resided at Mount Hope, near the present town of Bristol (R. I.) From him he obtained a grant of land now included in the town of Seekonk, in Massachusetts, on the east bank of Pawtucket (now Seekonk) river.‡ This territory was within the limits of the Plymouth colony, but Mr. Williams recognised the Indians only as the proprietors, and bought a title from the sachem. Ousamequin doubtless granted his request with pleasure, as a return for the services and presents which he had formerly received from Mr. Williams. If, as we have supposed, the exile was obliged to visit the sachem, and make these arrangements, the journey, on foot, increased that exposure to the severity of the elements, of which he complains.

He was, moreover, unprovided with a dwelling. Mr. Cotton (in his Bloody Tenet washed, p. 8.) says, "that some of his friends went to the place appointed by himself beforehand, to make provision of housing, and other neces-

* There is a strange confusion in the statements of different authors respecting the time of Mr. Williams' banishment, and of the settlement of Providence. The above date is unquestionably correct, for reasons which will hereafter be presented.

† Letter to Major Mason. ‡ Letter of Roger Williams.

saries for him against his coming." This statement however, must be incorrect. Mr. Williams' departure from Salem was sudden and unexpected; and his assertion, just quoted, that he did not know "what bread or bed did mean," for fourteen weeks, must be understood as excluding the idea of such a preparation as Mr. Cotton mentions. Mr. Williams, too, says, "I first pitched, and began to build and plant at Seekonk."* He had no house, it would seem, till he built one.

For the means of subsistence, he must have been dependent on the Indians. At that season, hunting and fishing were impracticable, if he had possessed the proper instruments. The earth was covered with snow, and he had not even the poor resource of roots. He may refer to his situation at this time, in the following lines, alluding to the Indians:

"God's Providence is rich to his,
Let none distrustful be;
In wilderness, in great distress,
These ravens have fed me."†

The spot, in Seekonk, where he reared his habitation, is believed, on good authority, to have been at Manton's Neck, near the cove, a short distance above the Central Bridge.‡

Here he probably hoped, that he might live in peace. He was soon joined by several friends, if they did not at first accompany him. His wife and children were still at Salem.

But Seekonk was not to be his home. In a short time, to use his own language, "I received a letter from my ancient friend, Mr. Winslow, the Governor of Plymouth, professing his own and others' love and respect to me, yet lovingly advising me, since I was fallen into the edge of their bounds, and they were loath to displease the Bay, to remove to the other side of the water, and there, he said, I had the country free before me, and might be as free as themselves, and we should be loving neighbors together."

This advice was apparently prudent and friendly, prompted by a desire of peace, and by a kind regard to Mr. Williams. It does not seem to deserve the harsh comments which

* Letter to Major Mason. † Key, chap. ii.

‡ The venerable Moses Brown assures me, that he has ascertained this fact, to his own satisfaction.

have sometimes been made on it. Mr. Williams himself does not speak of it in a tone of reproach. He immediately resolved to comply with the advice. He accordingly embarked in a canoe, with five others,* and proceeded down the stream. As they approached the little cove, near Tockwotten, now India Point, they were saluted, by a company of Indians, with the friendly interrogation, "*What cheer?*" a common English phrase, which they had learned from the colonists.† At this spot, they probably went on shore, but they did not long remain there.‡ They passed round India Point and Fox Point, and proceeded up the river on the west side of the peninsula, to a spot near the mouth of the Moshassuck river. Tradition reports, that Mr. Williams landed near a spring, which remains till this day.§ At this spot, the settlement of Rhode-Island commenced :

> "O call it holy ground,
> The soil where first they trod,
> They have left unstained, what there they found,
> Freedom to worship God."‖

To the town here founded, Mr. Williams, with his habitual piety, and in grateful remembrance of "God's merciful Providence to him in his distress," gave the name of Providence.

There has been much discussion respecting the precise period at which this memorable event occurred. There is a perplexing confusion in the statements of different writers. We shall be excused, if we examine the subject with some minuteness. Callender, in his Century Sermon, (p. 18) says, that it was "in the spring of the year 1634–5." Governor Hopkins, in his History of Providence,¶ places it

* William Harris, John Smith, (miller,) Joshua Verin, Thomas Angell and Francis Wickes. R. I. Register, 1828, article written by Moses Brown.

† Equivalent to the modern *How do you do?*

‡ The lands adjacent to this spot were called *Whatcheer*, in memory of the occurrence.

§ "Tradition has uniformly stated the place where they landed, to be at the spring southwest of the Episcopal church, at which a house has recently been built by Mr. Nehemiah Dodge." Moses Brown.

‖ Mrs. Hemans' noble ode, "The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers." This beautiful stanza applies with more literal truth to Roger Williams and his companions, than to all the Pilgrim fathers.

¶ Published in the Providence Gazette, from January to March, 1765, and republished in the 2 Mass. His. Col. ix.

"some time in the year 1634." Hutchinson (vol. i. p. 41) assigns the same year. Later writers have naturally been led into the same mistake. Backus (vol. i. p. 70) states, that in January, 1636, Mr. Williams left Massachusetts, which is the right date, according to the modern mode of computing time, though, by the style, which then prevailed, it was 1635.

But the period of his banishment is fixed decisively by the records of Massachusetts, and by Winthrop's Journal. His sentence of banishment was passed, November 3, 1635.* In January following, according to Winthrop (vol. i. p. 175) the Court resolved to send him to England, and the messengers found, that he had departed from Salem three days before their arrival.

In his letter to Major Mason, Mr. Williams says, "The next year after my banishment, the Lord drew the bow of the Pequod war against the country." This war commenced in July, 1636, with the murder of Oldham. This fact corroborates the preceding statement.

The time of his leaving Seekonk for Providence cannot be accurately determined, but we may approach very near to the true date.

Governor Winslow, of Plymouth, who advised him to leave Seekonk, entered on his official duties in March, 1635–6. This was the only year that he held the office of Governor, between 1633 and 1644.† Mr. Williams must, therefore, have been at Seekonk, subsequently to the date of Governor Winslow's accession to office.

In Mr. Williams' letter to Major Mason, he says, that he "began to build and plant at Seekonk." He did not begin to plant, we may presume, till the middle of April, if so early.‡ In the same letter, he speaks of his removal as occasioning his "loss of a harvest that year," from which remark we may reasonably infer, that the corn had attained a considerable growth before he left Seekonk, and consequently that he did not cross the river till the middle, perhaps, of June.

On the 26th of July, a letter was received from Mr. Williams, by Governor Vane, informing him of the murder

* Mass. Rec. vol. i. p. 163. † Backus, vol. i. 74.

‡ The Plymouth settlers, in 1623, began to plant their corn the middle of April. Prince, p. 216.

of Mr. Oldham, by the Indians of Block-Island.* This letter was written at Providence, and it proves, that Mr. Williams had removed thither previously to the 26th of July.

We may safely conclude, that he left Seekonk, not far from the middle of June, 1636. The exact day will never, it is probable, be ascertained.†

There is one circumstance, which, perhaps, misled Mr. Callender and Governor Hopkins respecting the year of Mr. Williams' arrival. In a deed, signed by himself and wife, and dated December 20, 1661, he used these words: "Having, in the year one thousand six hundred thirty-four, and in the year one thousand six hundred thirty-five, had several treaties with Canonicus and Miantinomo, the two chief sachems of the Narragansets, and in the end purchased of them the lands and meadows upon the two fresh rivers, called Moshassuck and Wanasquatucket, the two sachems having, by a deed under their hands, two years after the sale thereof, established and confirmed the bounds of these lands."

The statement, that he had held several treaties with the Narraganset sachems, in 1634 and 1635, presents some difficulty. But we have already seen, that while at Plymouth and at Salem, he held some intercourse with these chiefs. In a manuscript letter, already quoted, he says:

"I spared no cost towards them, and in gifts to Ousamequin and all his, and to Canonicus and all his, tokens and presents, many years before I came in person to the Narraganset; and therefore when I came, I was welcome to Ousamequin and to the old prince Canonicus, who was most shy of all English to his last breath."

It is probable, therefore, that the "treaties" which he mentions, as having been held in 1634 and 1635, were propositions concerning lands, made by him, perhaps, to the

* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 190.

† In a letter to the author, from John Howland, Esq. of Providence, one of the most intelligent and active members of the Rhode-Island Historical Society, he says, "When our Society was first formed, it was proposed to fix on the day of his arrival here, as the day of the annual meetings of the Society; and till that day could be ascertained, we decided on the day of the date of the charter of Charles II."

chiefs, through Indians, whom he saw at Boston or Salem, and by whom he was in the habit of sending to them presents. We have already intimated a conjecture, that for some time before his banishment, he had entertained the thought of a settlement in the Indian country. If so, it was natural for him to enter into negotiations for lands. But these propositions, whatever they were, were not concluded in the years which he mentions. He says, that "*in the end*," he purchased the lands at Providence, and that the deed was dated two years after the purchase. We accordingly find, that the deed was dated "at Narraganset, the 24th of the first month, commonly called March, in the second year of the plantation, or planting at Moshassuck, or Providence." The year is not mentioned in the instrument, but it is known to have been 1637–8.* This deed corresponds with Mr. Williams' statement, and refers to the year 1636 as the time of his actual purchase, and also as that of his arrival.

We will add another fact, to strengthen a position, which has, perhaps, been sufficiently established. A parchment deed, now in the possession of Moses Brown, is dated the "14th day of the second month, in the 5th year of our situation, or plantation, at Moshassuck, or Providence, and in the 17th year of King Charles, &c. 1641."† This deed also points to the year 1636, as the date of the first settlement of Providence.

In June, of this year, the settlement of Hartford (Con.) was begun. Rev. Messrs. Hooker and Stone, who had been settled at Newtown, (now Cambridge) removed, with their whole church, and founded the city of Hartford. A fort had been built, the preceding year, at Saybrook, at the mouth of the river Connecticut, and small settlements had been commenced at Weathersfield and Windsor.

* Backus, vol. i. p. 89. † Rhode-Island Register, 1828.

CHAPTER VIII.

Purchase of lands from the Indians—division of the lands among the settlers.

The spot where Mr. Williams and his companions landed was within the jurisdiction of the Narraganset Indians.* The sachems of this tribe were Canonicus, and his nephew Miantinomo. The former was an old man, and he probably associated with him his young nephew, as better fitted to sustain the toils and cares of royalty. Their residence is said by Gookin to have been about Narraganset Bay, and on the island of Canonicut.

The first object of Mr. Williams would naturally be, to obtain from the sachems a grant of land for his new colony. He probably visited them, and received a verbal cession of the territory, which, two years afterwards, was formally conveyed to him by a deed. This instrument may properly be quoted here :†

"At Narraganset, the 24th of the first month, commonly called March, the second year of the plantation or planting at Moshassuck, or Providence; Memorandum, that we, Canonicus and Miantinomo, the two chief sachems

* "Under the general name of Narraganset, were included Narraganset proper, and Coweset. Narraganset proper extended south from what is now called Warwick to the ocean; Coweset, from Narraganset northerly to the Nipmuck country, which now forms Oxford, (Mass.) and some other adjoining towns. The western boundaries of Narraganset and Coweset cannot be definitely ascertained. Gookin says, the Narraganset jurisdiction extended thirty or forty miles from Seekonk river and Narraganset Bay, including the islands, southwesterly to a place called Wekapage, four or five miles to the eastward of Pawcatuck river; that it included a part of Long-Island, Block-Island, Coweset and Niantick, and received tribute from some of the Nipmucks. After some research, I am induced to believe, that the Nianticks occupied the territory now called Westerly. If so, then the jurisdiction of the Narragansets extended to the Pawcatuck, and perhaps beyond it."—Whatcheer, Notes, p. 176.

† This is transcribed from a copy furnished by John Howland, Esq. It differs a little from that contained in Backus, vol. i. p. 89. The orthography is conformed to modern usage.

of Narraganset, having two years since sold unto Roger Williams the lands and meadows upon the two fresh rivers, called Moshassuck and Wanasquatucket, do now, by these presents, establish and confirm the bounds of these lands, from the river and fields of Pawtucket, the great hill of Notaquoncanot, on the northwest, and the town of Mashapaug, on the west.* We also, in consideration of the many kindnesses and services he hath continually done for us, both with our friends of Massachusetts, as also at Connecticut, and Apaum, or Plymouth, we do freely give unto him all that land from those rivers reaching to Pawtuxet river; as also the grass and meadows upon the said Pawtuxet river. In witness whereof, we have hereunto set our hands.

The mark (a bow) of CANONICUS.
The mark (an arrow) of MIANTINOMO.

In the presence of
The mark of SOHASH.
The mark of ALSOMUNSIT.

"1639. Memorandum. 3d month, 9th day, this was all again confirmed by Miantinomo. He acknowledged, that he also [illegible]† and gave up the streams of Pawtucket and Pawtuxet, without limits, we might have for our use of cattle.

Witness hereof,
ROGER WILLIAMS,
BENEDICT ARNOLD."

The lands thus ceded to Mr. Williams he conveyed to twelve men, who accompanied, or soon joined, him, reserving for himself an equal part only. Before we narrate the particulars of this transaction, a few remarks are necessary.

It appears from the tenor of the deed, and from other

* "The great hill, Notaquoncanot, mentioned as a bound, is three miles west from Weybosset bridge. Mashapaug is about two miles south of the hill.—J. H."

† Mr. Backus (vol. i. p. 90) has this reading: "He acknowledged this his act and hand; up the streams," &c. But the reading in the text is retained, according to Mr. Howland's copy. The deed was written by Roger Williams, but the memorandum by some other person.

evidence, that the original sale included only the lands mentioned in the first part of the deed. These are said by the sachems to have been "sold" to Mr. Williams. The grass and meadows on Pawtuxet river are said to be given to him, in consideration of his services.

An interesting question, which occasioned much debate in the early times of the colony, claims consideration here. Were the lands, ceded by the sachems, so conveyed, that they became the property of Roger Williams himself, and might he, with justice and honor, have sold or retained them, as he pleased? An answer to this question will throw light on his subsequent conduct.

The conveyance in the deed is made to him alone. The title, consequently, was vested in him, so far as the instrument went. But this fact does not decide the point. It was a subject of accusation against him, that the conveyance was not made to him and *his associates*. Did he, then, act on behalf of others, as well as for himself?

If his own solemn and often repeated assertions are worthy of credit, he obtained the lands by his own money and influence, and might have held them as his property.

He argues the case at large, in his letter to the Commissioners, in 1677, to whom he was accused of unfair conduct respecting the lands.

He asserts, in the first place, "It is not true, that I was employed by any, was supplied by any, or desired any to come with me into these parts. My soul's desire was, to do the natives good, and to that end to learn their language, (which I afterwards printed) and therefore desired not to be troubled with English company." He adds, that "out of pity, he gave leave to several persons to come along in his company." He makes the same statement in his deed of 1661:—"I desired it might be for a shelter for persons distressed for conscience. I then considering the condition of divers of my distressed countrymen, I communicated my said purchase unto my loving friends, [whom he names] who then desired to take shelter here with me."

It seems, then, that his original design was to come alone, probably to dwell among the Indians, and do them good; but he altered his plan, and resolved to establish a refuge for those who might flee from persecution. The

project was his own, and worthy of his generous and liberal mind. He certainly was not employed, as an agent, to purchase lands for others. He uses another argument: "I mortgaged my house in Salem (worth some hundreds) for supplies to go through, and, therefore, was it a single business."

Having thus shown that he acted for himself, and on his own responsibility, he states, that the lands were procured from the sachems by his influence alone. He enumerates several advantages which he enjoyed in this negotiation: "1. A constant, zealous desire to dive into the natives' language. 2. God was pleased to give me a painful, patient spirit to lodge with them in their filthy, smoky holes, (even while I lived at Plymouth and Salem) to gain their tongue. 3. I spared no cost towards them, and in gifts to Ousamequin, yea, and all his, and to Canonicus, and all his, tokens and presents, many years before I came in person to the Narraganset, and when I came, I was welcome to Ousamequin, and to the old prince Canonicus, who was most shy of all English, to his last breath. 4. I was known by all the Wampanoags and the Narragansets to be a public speaker at Plymouth and Salem, and, therefore, with them, held as a sachem. 5. I could debate with them (in a great measure) in their own language. 6. I had the favor and countenance of that noble soul, Mr. Winthrop, whom all Indians respected."

He proceeds to state, respecting Canonicus, that "it was not thousands nor tens of thousands of money could have bought of him an English entrance into this Bay."

In the deed, already quoted, he says, "By God's merciful assistance, I was the procurer of the purchase, not by monies nor payment, the natives being so shy and jealous, that monies could not do it, but by that language, acquaintance and favor with the natives, and other advantages, which it pleased God to give me; and also bore the charges and venture of all the gratuities, which I gave to the great sachems, and other sachems round about us, and lay engaged for a loving and peaceable neighborhood with them, to my great charge and travel."*

* Backus, vol. i. p. 94.

These facts prove, that the lands were granted to Mr. Williams, as a personal favor, as an expression of gratitude on the part of the sachems, and as a remuneration for presents, which they had been receiving from him for several years. Mr. Williams, then, was entitled to make the assertion, which is contained in his touching letter to the town of Providence, in 1654: "I have been blamed for parting with Moshassuck, and afterwards Pawtuxet, (which were mine own, as truly as any man's coat upon his back) without reserving to myself a foot of land, or an inch of voice, more than to my servants and strangers."*

Mr. Williams was thus the legal proprietor of the lands which were ceded to him, and he might have remained so, if he had pleased. He had a clear title from the Indians, and he had, a few years later certainly, sufficient influence with the rulers in England, to obtain a recognition of his rights, and a confirmation of his authority. He might, doubtless, have been, like William Penn, the proprietary of his colony, and might have exercised a control over its government. He would, we may easily believe, have exercised his authority as wisely and beneficially as the great legislator of Pennsylvania. The peace of his settlement and his own comfort would, perhaps, have been promoted, if he had retained this power awhile, instead of committing it to the whole company of settlers, among whom, from the nature of the colony, as a refuge for "all sorts of consciences," some heterogeneous and discordant tempers might be expected to find admission. That he was blamed for this conduct, we know from his letter to the town of Providence, already quoted ;† and as that letter was writ-

* Backus, vol. i. p. 290.

† See above. He adds, "It hath been told me, that I labored for a licentious and contentious people ; that I have foolishly parted with town and colony advantages, by which I might have preserved both town and colony in as good order as any in the country about us." The following letter from his son may be properly quoted here, as confirming the preceding statements :

"To all them that deem themselves purchasers in the town of Providence, if they be real purchasers, I would have them make it appear.

"Gentlemen,

"I thought good in short to present you with these few lines, concerning the bounds of Providence, &c. I have put forth several

ten soon after his return from England, we may infer, that the censure came from leading men there.

But he chose to found his colony on pure democratic principles; as a commonwealth, where all civil power should be exercised by the people alone, and where God should be the only ruler over the conscience.

We will now relate the facts respecting his division of the lands among his associates.

The persons who accompanied him, at his first landing, were William Harris, John Smith, Joshua Verin, Thomas Angell and Francis Wickes. Several others joined him at various times, previously to October 8, 1638, on

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queries to several men in the township, to be answered; but have not any answer from any of them; and, as I judge, doth not care to have any discourse about it. Therefore, now I speak to you all, desiring your honors will be pleased to consider of the matter, and to answer me to one or two queries; that is, whether you have any thing under my father's hand to prove the bounds of this town afore those twelve men were concerned; or whether my father disposed of any of the township to any other persons since the twelve men were first in power, &c. If my father had disposed or sold his whole township, and they he sold it to, or have it under his hand, prove the sale, although it was but for one penny, God forbid that ever I should open my mouth about it, &c. It is evident, that this township was my father's, and it is held in his name against all unjust clamors, &c. Can you find such another now alive, or in this age? He gave away his lands and other estate, to them that he thought were most in want, until he gave away all, so that he had nothing to help himself, so that he being not in a way to get for his supply, and being ancient, it must needs pinch somewhere. I do not desire to say what I have done for both father and mother. I judge they wanted nothing that was convenient for ancient people, &c. What my father gave, I believe he had a good intent in it, and thought God would provide for his family. He never gave me but about three acres of land, and but a little afore he deceased. It looked hard, that out of so much at his disposing, that I should have so little, and he so little. For the rest, &c. I did not think to be so large; so referring your honors to those queries you have among you,

"Your friend and neighbor,

"DANIEL WILLIAMS.

"Providence, Aug. 24, 1710.

"If a covetous man had that opportunity as he had, most of this town would have been his tenants, I believe.

D. W."

which day, Mr. Williams executed an instrument, of the following tenor.*

"*Providence, 8th of the 8th month*, 1638, (*so called.*)

"Memorandum, that I, Roger Williams, having formerly purchased of Canonicus and Miantinomo, this our situation, or plantation, of New Providence,† viz. the two fresh rivers, Wanasquatucket and Moshassuck, and the ground and meadows thereupon; in consideration of thirty pounds received from the inhabitants of said place, do freely and fully pass, grant and make over equal right and power of enjoying and disposing of the same grounds and lands unto my loving friends and neighbors, Stukely Westcott, William Arnold, Thomas James, Robert Cole, John Greene, John Throckmorton, William Harris, William Carpenter, Thomas Olney, Francis Weston, Richard Waterman, Ezekiel Holliman, and such others as the major part of us shall admit into the same fellowship of vote with us:—As also I do freely make and pass over equal right and power of enjoying and disposing of the lands and grounds reaching from the aforesaid rivers unto the great river Pawtuxet, with the grass and meadows thereupon, which was so lately given and granted by the aforesaid sachems to me. Witness my hand,

ROGER WILLIAMS."‡

On the 20th of December, 1661, the following deed was executed. It is inserted here, because it is an interesting document, and it throws much light on the transactions which we are considering.

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* The first deed was "written in a strait of time and haste," as he alleged, and contained only the initials of the names of the grantees. He was censured for this by some of them, as if he had done it for some sinister design! They urged him to give them another deed, which he finally did, on the 22d of December, 1666, when the document in the text was written, retaining the original date.

† The name, *New Providence*, appears in a few documents written by Mr. Williams himself, and by others, but it was soon discontinued. The origin of the epithet *New* may have been, a desire to distinguish the town from the island of Providence, one of the Bahama islands, on which a plantation was begun in 1629. Holmes' Annals, vol. i. p. 201. This island has since received the name of New Providence. The town of Roger Williams was entitled to the precedence.

‡ Backus, vol. i. p. 92.

"Be it known unto all men by these presents, that I, Roger Williams, of the town of Providence, in the Narraganset Bay, in New-England, having, in the year one thousand six hundred thirty-four, and in the year one thousand six hundred thirty-five, had several treaties with Canonicus and Miantinomo, the two chief sachems of the Narraganset, and in the end purchased of them the lands and meadows upon the two fresh rivers called Moshassuck and Wanasquatucket, the two sachems having, by a deed, under their hands, two years after the sale thereof, established and confirmed the bounds of these lands from the rivers and fields of Pawtucket, the great hill of Notaquoncanot on the northwest, and the town of Mashapaug on the west, notwithstanding I had the frequent promise of Miantinomo, my kind friend, that it should not be land that I should want about these bounds mentioned, provided that I satisfied the Indians there inhabiting. I having made covenant of peaceable neighborhood with all the sachems and natives round about us, and having, of a sense of God's merciful Providence unto me in my distress, called the place Providence, I desired it might be for a shelter for persons distressed for conscience. I then considering the condition of divers of my distressed countrymen, I communicated my said purchase unto my loving friends, John Throckmorton, William Arnold, William Harris, Stukely Westcott, John Greene, Senior, Thomas Olney, Senior, Richard Waterman, and others, who then desired to take shelter here with me, and in succession unto so many others as we should receive into the fellowship and society of enjoying and disposing of the said purchase; and besides the first that were admitted, our town records declare, that afterwards we received Chad Brown, William Field, Thomas Harris, Senior, William Wickenden, Robert Williams, Gregory Dexter, and others, as our town book declares; and whereas, by God's merciful assistance, I was the procurer of the purchase, not by monies nor payment, the natives being so shy and jealous that monies could not do it, but by that language, acquaintance and favor with the natives, and other advantages, which it pleased God to give me, and also bore the charges and venture of all the gratuities, which I gave to the great sachems and other sachems and natives round about us,

and lay engaged for a loving and peaceable neighborhood with them, to my great charge and travel; it was therefore thought fit by some loving friends, that I should receive some loving consideration and gratuity, and it was agreed between us, that every person, that should be admitted into the fellowship of enjoying land and disposing of the purchase, should pay thirty shillings unto the public stock; and first, about thirty pounds should be paid unto myself, by thirty shillings a person, as they were admitted; this sum I received, and in love to my friends, and with respect to a town and place of succor for the distressed as aforesaid, I do acknowledge the said sum and payment as full satisfaction; and whereas in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-seven,* so called, I delivered the deed subscribed by the two aforesaid chief sachems, so much thereof as concerneth the aforementioned lands, from myself and from my heirs, unto the whole number of the purchasers, with all my power, right and title therein, reserving only unto myself one single share equal unto any of the rest of that number; I now again, in a more formal way, under my hand and seal, confirm my former resignation of that deed of the lands aforesaid, and bind myself, my heirs, my executors, my administrators and assigns, never to molest any of the said persons already received, or hereafter to be received, into the society of purchasers, as aforesaid; but that they, their heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, shall at all times quietly and peaceably enjoy the premises and every part thereof, and I do further by these presents bind myself, my heirs, my executors, my administrators and assigns, never to lay any claim, nor cause any claim to be laid, to any of the lands aforementioned, or unto any part or parcel thereof, more than unto my own single share, by virtue or pretence of any former bargain, sale or mortgage whatsoever, or jointures, thirds or entails made by me, the said Roger

* This seems to be loosely expressed. Mr. Williams could not mean that he delivered the deed to the grantees in 1637, for several of the persons named, did not arrive in Providence till after April, 1638. (Backus, vol. i. p. 92.) His own deed of cession is dated Oct. 8, 1638. He probably meant, that he delivered the deed, signed by the sachems in 1637, to the purchasers. This deed was dated March 24, the last day of 1637, old style.

Williams, or of any other person, either for, by, through or under me. In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, the twentieth day of December, in the present year one thousand six hundred sixty-one.

"ROGER WILLIAMS, (Seal.*)

"Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of us, Thomas Smith, Joseph Carpenter. Memorandum, the words, of the purchase, were interlined before these presents were sealed. I, Mary Williams, wife unto Roger Williams, do assent unto the premises. Witness my hand, this twentieth day of December, in this present year one thousand six hundred sixty-one.

The mark of (M. W.) MARY WILLIAMS.†

"Acknowledged and subscribed before me,

"WILLIAM FIELD, *Assistant.*

"Enrolled, April the 6th, 1662, pr. me,

"THOMAS OLNEY, Junr., *Town Clerk.*"

From this document, it appears, that the twelve persons to whom the lands, on the Moshassuck and Wanasquatucket rivers, were conveyed by Mr. Williams, did not pay him any part of the thirty pounds, which he received; but that the sum of thirty shillings was exacted of every person who was afterwards admitted, to form a common stock. From this stock, thirty pounds were paid to Mr. Williams, for the reasons mentioned in the instrument last quoted.‡

For the lands on the Pawtuxet river, however, Mr. Williams received twelve-thirteenths of twenty pounds, from the twelve persons named in the deed of October 8, 1638. On the same day, the following instrument was executed:—

"It is agreed, this day abovesaid, that all the meadow grounds at Pawtuxet, bounding upon the fresh river, on both sides, are to be impropriated unto those thirteen persons, being now incorporated together in our town of

* An anchor, reclining.

† We are surprised at the form of this signature. That Mrs. Williams could not write, would be incredible, if it were not rendered certain that she could write, by a reference to her letters, in a public document at Providence. It is probable, that she wrote the initials, believing them to be sufficient; and some person added the words, *the mark of*, and wrote the name at length.

‡ Mr. Backus so understood it. Vol. i. p. 93.

Providence, viz.: Ezekiel Holliman, Francis Weston, Roger Williams, Thomas Olney, Robert Cole, William Carpenter, William Harris, John Throckmorton, Richard Waterman, John Greene, Thomas James, William Arnold, Stukely Westcott; and to be equally divided among them, and every one to pay an equal proportion to raise up the sum of twenty pounds for the same; and if it shall come to pass, that some, or any one, of these thirteen persons aforesaid, do not pay or give satisfaction of his or their equal proportion of the aforesaid sum of twenty pounds, by this day eight weeks, which will be the 17th day of the 10th month next ensuing, then they or he shall leave their or his proportion of meadow grounds unto the rest of those thirteen persons, to be at their disposing, who shall make up the whole sum of twenty pounds, which is to be paid to Roger Williams."

This money was punctually paid on the 3d of December following, and was acknowledged as follows:—

"According to former agreement, I received of the neighbors abovesaid, the full sum of £18 11*s.* 3*d.* Per me,

ROGER WILLIAMS."

He thus retained an equal share in the lands on the Pawtuxet river, which were very valuable to the new settlers, on account of the natural meadows along its banks. These lands were afterwards the occasion of a protracted contention.

From the facts which we have stated, it appears, that Mr. Williams generously admitted the first twelve proprietors of the Providence purchase to an equal share with himself, without exacting from them any remuneration. The thirty pounds which he received were paid by succeeding settlers, at the rate of thirty shillings each. But this sum of thirty pounds was not paid to him, as an equivalent for the land. It was, as he calls it, a "loving gratuity," and was intended to remunerate him for the presents which he had given to the Indians, and for the expenses which he had incurred in procuring the lands. But he affirmed, that all which he received was far less than he expended.* The same may be said respecting the money paid for the Pawtuxet lands.

* He found "Indian gifts" very costly. He was under the necessity of making frequent presents. He says, that he let the Indians

The conduct of Mr. Williams, in these transactions, must be acknowledged to have been highly honorable, disinterested and liberal. He held the title to the whole territory, and he might, apparently, have amassedwealth and gratified ambition, by retaining the control of the town, and selling the lands, to be held of him as the proprietor. But he renounced all plans of power and emolument; he placed himself on an equality with the other settlers, and surrendered the territory to the whole body of freemen, among whom he claimed no other influence than that which sprung from his personal character. The sum which he received was not even a remuneration for his actual expenses in procuring the territory.

It does not diminish this praise, that the settlers were obliged to satisfy the claims of many individual Indians. The grant from the sachems might, perhaps, have been considered as a full title; but the justice and humanity of Roger Williams and his friends, led them to make compensation to the natives who occupied the territory. The whole sum paid to Mr. Williams and to the Indians, for Providence and Pawtuxet, was stated by William Harris, in 1677, to have been one hundred and sixty pounds.

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have his shallop and pinnace at command, transporting fifty at a time, and lodging fifty at his house; that he never denied them any thing lawful; that when he established a trading house at Narraganset, Canonicus had freely what he desired; and when the old chief was about to die, he sent for Mr. Williams, and "desired to be buried in my cloth, of free gift."

CHAPTER IX.

Settlement of the town of Providence—Whatcheer—islands of Prudence, Patience and Hope.

Our account of the division of the lands has led us onward to a period more than two years after Mr. Williams' arrival. Some time must have been spent in his negotiations with the sachems; but he certainly erected a house soon after his landing, for in a letter, written within a short time from that event, he says, "Miantinomo kept his barbarous court lately at my house," and in his letter to Major Mason, he mentions, that he entertained General Stoughton, at his house, in May, 1637, when the Massachusetts troops were on their march against the Pequods.

It is probable, that Mrs. Williams and her two children came from Salem to Providence, in the summer of 1636, in company with several persons, who wished to join their exiled pastor.*

The family of Mr. Williams was now dependent on his exertions for support. No supplies could be derived from Massachusetts. The natives were unable to afford much aid. It is probable, that Mr. Williams had nearly expended all his funds, in the support of his family during his absence, and in the negotiations with the Indians. Of his poverty,† there is evidence, in a touching incident, mentioned in his letter to Major Mason. It is alike honorable to all the parties: "It pleased the Father of Spirits to touch many hearts, dear to him, with many relentings; amongst which, that great and pious soul, Mr. Winslow, melted, and kindly visited me at Providence, and put a piece of gold into the hands of my wife, for our supply."

In a deed, which was enrolled January 29, 1667, Mr. Williams says, that he planted, with his own hands, at his first coming, the two Indian fields, Whatcheer and Saxi-

* Throckmorton, Olney and Westcott, three of the first proprietors, were members of the Salem church. Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 371.

† Hubbard repeatedly alludes, in a somewhat taunting tone, to the poverty of Roger Williams.—pp. 205, 350.

frax Hill, which he had purchased of the natives. Thus was he forced, as at many other times, to resort to manual labor for his subsistence. In his reply to Mr. Cotton, (p. 38) he says: "It is not unknown to many witnesses, in Plymouth, Salem and Providence, that the discusser's time hath not been spent (though as much as any others whosoever) altogether in spiritual labors and public exercises of the word; but day and night, at home and abroad, on the land and water, at the hoe, at the oar, for bread." But he sustained all his labors and hardships with a patient spirit, and with a steadfast adherence to his principles.

His house was, undoubtedly, erected near the spot where he landed, and a few rods eastward of the celebrated spring.* Here the wanderer found a resting place. This was his home, for more than forty years. Here he died, and near the site of his dwelling his ashes were deposited.

It would be an interesting effort of the imagination, to contrast the situation of Providence at the time of the settlement, with the present condition of that beautiful and flourishing town. Where now are busy streets, and ample warehouses, and elegant mansions, and a population of nearly 20,000 souls, were, at that time, dense forests, and a few scattered Indian families. How astonishing is the change! Roger Williams himself, with all his vigor of imagination, and his ardent temperament, could not have anticipated the expansion of his little settlement to its present amplitude, beauty and strength. The glorious vision could not have visited his mind; but he acted under the power of that prophetic faith, which assured him of success, in his efforts for the welfare of men. He looked beyond the present, to the bright future, and was confident, that his principles, though then misunderstood and rejected, would ultimately triumph.

In the course of two years, Mr. Williams was joined by a number of friends from Massachusetts, with whom, as we have seen, he shared the lands which he had obtained.

* The author of Whatcheer, (p. 163) has accommodated his hero with the dwelling of a deceased Indian powaw. Poets have a license to build castles in the air, or on the land. I fear that Roger Williams was not so easily furnished with a habitation. It was, however, we may suppose, sufficiently humble.

The community, thus formed, were invested with the power of admitting others to the privileges of citizenship. Their number was soon increased, by emigrants from Massachusetts, and from Europe.* It was the design of Mr. Williams, that his colony should be open to all persons who might choose to reside there, without regard to their religious opinions. He was careful, nevertheless, to provide for the maintenance of the civil peace. Every inhabitant was required to subscribe the following covenant:

"We, whose names are here under-written, being desirous to inhabit in the town of Providence, do promise to submit ourselves, in active or passive obedience, to all such orders or agreements as shall be made for public good of the body, in an orderly way, by the major consent of the present inhabitants, masters of families, incorporated together into a township, and such others whom they shall admit unto the same, *only in civil things*."

This simple instrument, which combines the principles of a pure democracy, and of unrestricted religious liberty, was the basis of the first government in Providence. It was undoubtedly drawn up by Roger Williams. It bears the impress of his character, and it was the germ of those free institutions, under which Rhode-Island has flourished till the present day.

The government of the town was thus placed in the hands of the inhabitants; and the legislative, judicial and executive functions were exercised, for several years, by the citizens in town meeting. Two deputies were appointed, from time to time, whose duties were, to preserve order, to settle disputes, to call town meetings, to preside in them, and to see that their resolutions were executed.† But the power of the deputies was very limited, and their term of office short. A form of government so simple could not exist, except in a small community, and among men whose moral principles were pure, and their habits peaceful. Winthrop was mistaken, when he asserted of the settlers

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* Among these, were Chad Brown, William Field, Thomas Harris, William Wickenden, Robert Williams (brother of Roger) Richard Scott, William Reynolds, John Warner, Benedict Arnold, Joshua Winsor and Thomas Hopkins. Backus, vol. i. p. 93.

† Gov. Hopkins, History of Providence, 2 Mass. His. Col. ix. p. 183.

at Providence, that they "would have no magistrates."* If they had not the usual forms, they had the essence of magistracy.

The settlers applied themselves to agriculture, for subsistence. An intelligent antiquarian, of Providence, whose opinions are authority on all points touching its early history, says,† that the first inhabitants settled "on such places as were most convenient, and planted their corn on the old Indian fields, as they could agree among themselves. When their number had increased, they laid out what is now the Main street, on the east side of the river, and divided the land eastward of the street, into lots of six acres each, being of equal breadth, and extending back to what is now Hope street. There were eventually one hundred and two of these six acre lots, extending from Mile End Brook, which enters the river a little north of Fox Point, to Harrington's Lane, on the north, which lane is now the dividing line between Providence and North Providence. Each proprietor had one of these six acre lots, and on which he built his house. How they were located, whether by lot or draft, or by choice, I am not informed; but it is probable that the first comers had their choice, as the six acre lot of Roger Williams was the place where he first landed, and had built his house.‡ The street, now Bowen street, leading from Main to Benefit street, divides that part of his lot nearly in the middle. The object of locating themselves so near together was for security and mutual aid against the Indians, and in conformity to the practice in Europe. Each proprietor, besides his town lot, as it was called, took up out land, upland and meadows, by grant of the whole in proprietors' meeting. These grants were entered on the records. None of them,

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* Vol. i. p. 293.

† John Howland, Esq. in a letter to the author.

‡ Moses Brown says (Rhode-Island Register, 1828) "Roger Williams' lot was No. 38, northward from Mile End Cove, at the south end of the town; William Harris' was No. 36; John Smith's, No. 41; Joshua Verins', No. 39, adjoining on the north of Roger Williams' lot; Francis Wickes', No. 35. The Court House appears to be standing on No. 34. These first six settlers all became proprietors, though Francis Wickes and Thomas Angell did not receive full shares till they became of age."

at first, took up sufficient for a farm in one place. Each one, besides his *upland*, as it was termed, or planting land, had, in another place, and frequently quite distant, his proportion of meadow land. This was necessary, because there was no hay seed known or in use. They had no grass for winter fodder, but bog or salt meadow, or thatch, and each must have his share of this, or his cattle would perish, or browse in the woods in winter."

Roger Williams, in addition to his six acre town lot, had a lot in the neighborhood of Whatcheer cove. The deed, already quoted, may be appropriately introduced here, as a document which belongs to the history of Roger Williams and of the town:

"Whereas, by the good Providence of God, I, Roger Williams, purchased this plantation of the natives, partly by the favors which I had long before with the sachems gotten at my cost and hazard, and partly with my own monies, paid them, in satisfaction for the settling of the said plantation, in the midst of the barbarians round about us; and whereas for the name of God and public good, and especially for the receiving of such as were troubled elsewhere about the worship of God, I freely parted with my whole purchase unto the township, or commonalty, of the then inhabitants, and yet reserved to myself the two Indian fields, called Whatcheer and Saxifrax Hill, as having peculiarly satisfied the owners of those fields for them, besides my general purchase of the whole from the sachems, and also planted both those fields at my first coming as my own peculiar with mine own hands, and whereas the town of Providence by their deputies, then called five Disposers, William Field was one, long since laid out unto me the aforesaid field called Whatcheer, and adjoined my six acre lot unto it, making up together twelve acres by the eighteen foot pole, and I having forgotten my bounds, the town deputies, William Field and Arthur Fenner, have since laid out and measured the said twelve acres unto me by the eighteen foot pole as aforesaid. These are to certify unto all men, that I, the said Roger Williams, have, for a full satisfaction already received from James Ellis, of Providence, sold and demised unto the said James Ellis, the said twelve acres aforesaid, bounded on the east by the river, on the west by a highway between the said

twelve acres and the land of Nicholas Power deceased, on the north by a highway lying between the said twelve acres and William Field's land, and on the south by Mr. Benedict Arnold's land; the aforesaid twelve acres I do by these presents demise and alienate from myself, my heirs, executors, &c. to the aforesaid James Ellis, his heirs, executors, &c. with all the appertenances and privileges thereof.

Witness my hand and seal,

ROGER WILLIAMS. (*An arrow.*)

In the presence of us witnesses, Arthur Fenner, William Field, enrolled the 29th day of January, in the year 1667.

Pr. me, SHADRACH MANTON, *Town Clerk.*"

This field, Whatcheer, was afterwards sold to Arthur Fenner, Esquire, and is now occupied, as the family seat of the Hon. James Fenner, formerly Governor of Rhode-Island.

We may mention here, that Mr. Williams obtained the island of *Prudence*, from the Indians, and held it as a joint proprietor with Governor Winthrop, of Massachusetts. The following letter relates to this transaction :*

" *The last of the week, I think the* 28*th of the* 8*th.*

" Sir,

" The bearer, Miantinomo, resolving to go on his visit, I am bold to request a word of advice from you, concerning a proposition made by Canonicus and himself to me some half year since. Canonicus gave an island in this bay to Mr. Oldham, by name Chibachuwese, upon condition, as it should seem, that he would dwell there near unto them. The Lord (in whose hands all our hearts are) turning their affections towards myself, they desired me to remove thither and dwell nearer to them. I have answered once and again, that for the present I mind not to remove ; but if I have it from them, I would give them satisfaction for it, and build a little house and put in some swine, as understanding the place to have store of fish and good feeding for swine. Of late I have heard, that Mr. Gibbons, upon occasion, motioned your desire and his own of putting some swine on some of these islands, which hath made me since more desire to obtain it, because I might thereby not

* Copied from 3 His. Col. i. 165.

only benefit myself, but also pleasure yourself, whom I more desire to pleasure and honor. I spoke of it now to this sachem, and he tells me, that because of the store of fish, Canonicus desires that I would accept half, (it being spectacle-wise, and between a mile or two in circuit, as I guess) and he would reserve the other; but I think, if I go over, I shall obtain the whole. Your loving counsel, how far it may be inoffensive, because it was once (upon a condition not kept,) Mr. Oldham's. So, with respective salutes to your kind self and Mrs. Winthrop, I rest,

"Your worship's unfeigned, in all I may,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"For his much honored Mr. Governor, these."

Governor Winthrop retained his moiety of the island, and gave it, in his will, to his son Stephen.*

Mr. Williams also owned the islands *Patience* and *Hope*. The names of the three islands are indicative of his mind. William Harris said, in 1677, in a somewhat reproachful tone, that these islands were "all put away." Mr. Williams sold them, perhaps, as he certainly did some other portions of his property, to maintain himself and family, during his long and unrequited toils, in England, for the welfare of the colony. To a native of Rhode-Island, these islands should be interesting monuments of the virtues and services of her founder.

Having thus stated the manner in which the settlement at Providence was commenced, we must now return to the period of the first arrival of Mr. Williams, and narrate briefly his agency in averting the imminent danger of a general league among the natives for the destruction of the colonists.

* Journal, vol. ii. p. 360.

CHAPTER X.

Mr. Williams prevents the Indian league—war with the Pequods—their defeat and ruin.

The Pequods were, as we have already remarked, the most warlike tribe of Indians in New-England, and the most hostile to the colonists, not perhaps so much from a greater degree of ferocity, as from a clearer foresight of the effects which the natives had reason to apprehend from the increase of the whites.

In 1634, Captains Stone and Norton, of Massachusetts, with eight other Englishmen, were murdered by the Indians, in a small trading vessel, on Connecticut river. It is not certain, that the murderers were Pequods, but they fled to this tribe for protection, and divided with them the property which they had plundered. The Pequods thus became responsible for the crime; and the magistrates of Massachusetts sent to them messengers to demand satisfaction, but without success. The Pequods afterwards sent messengers, with gifts, to Massachusetts, exculpating the tribe from the guilt of the murder. The Governor and Council, after a conference of several days, and a consultation, as usual, with the principal ministers, concluded with them a treaty of peace and friendship.*

* Winthrop, vol. i. 147, 149. The Pequods agreed to deliver up the individuals who were engaged in the murder, and to pay four hundred fathoms of wampumpeag, forty beaver skins, and thirty otter skins. While the Pequod ambassadors were at Boston, a party of the Narragansets came as far as Naponset, and it was rumored that their object was to murder the Pequod ambassadors. The magistrates had a conference at Roxbury, with the Narragansets, (among whom were two sachems) and persuaded them to make peace with the Pequods, to which the sachems agreed, the magistrates having secretly promised them, as a condition, a part of the wampumpeag, which the Pequods had stipulated to pay. The note of Mr. Savage, on this affair, deserves to be repeated:

"If any doubt has ever been entertained, in Europe or America, of the equitable and pacific principles of the founders of New-England, in their relations with the Indians, the secret history, in the foregoing paragraph, of this negotiation, should dissipate it. By the unholy

But no treaty could appease the jealous hostility of the Pequods. In July, 1636, a short time after Mr. Williams' removal to Providence, a party of Indians murdered Mr. John Oldham, near Block-Island, whither he had gone from Massachusetts, in a small barque, for purposes of trade. The murderers fled to the Pequods, by whom they were protected. It was suspected, however, that the murder was contrived by some of the Narragansets and Nianticks; and there was evidently some disposition among these tribes and the Pequods to form a league for the destruction of the English.

The first intelligence of the murder of Mr. Oldham, and of the proposed league, was communicated by Mr. Williams, in a letter to Governor Vane, at Boston, a few days after the event. With a spirit of forgiveness and philanthropy, which honors his memory, he promptly informed those who had so recently expelled him from the colony, of the peril which now threatened them. It may be alleged, that self-preservation impelled him to appeal to Massachusetts for assistance to defeat a project, which, if accomplished, would have overwhelmed himself and his colony in ruin. But his influence with the Indians was so great, that it is probable he might have secured his own safety and that of his companions. The merit of his generous mediation ought not to be sullied, because his own

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maxims of vulgar policy, the discord of these unfriendly nations would have been encouraged, and our European fathers should have employed the passions of the aborigines for their mutual destruction. On the contrary, an honest artifice was resorted to for their reconciliation, and the tribute received by us from one offending party was, by a Christian deception, divided with their enemies, to procure mutual peace. Such mediation is more useful than victory, and more honorable than conquest."

It may be added, here, as an illustration of the temper of the times, that Mr. Eliot, the Indian apostle, expressed, in a sermon, some disapprobation of this treaty with the Pequods, for this reason, among others, that the magistrates and ministers acted without authority from the people. He was called to account, and Mr. Cotton and two other ministers were appointed to convince him of his error. The good man appeared to be convinced, and agreed to make a public retraction. It is stated by Dr. Bentley, that Mr. Williams, then at Salem, expressed his disapprobation of the treaty, doubtless on the same ground, of the combination of civil and clerical agency in the transaction. But Mr. Williams would not retract, after the example of Eliot.

welfare was at the same time advanced. Violent passions often make men forget or disregard their own interests. A vindictive spirit might have been willing to hazard its own safety, for the pleasure of ample vengeance on the authors of its wrongs.

The Massachusetts government, on the 24th of August, sent by water an armed force of eighty volunteers, under the command of John Endicott, Esq. with instructions to "put to death the men of Block-Island, but to spare the women and children, and to bring them away, and to take possession of the island; and from thence to go to the Pequods, to demand the murderers of Captain Stone and other English, some thousand fathoms of wampum, for damages, and some of their children as hostages, which, if they should refuse, they were to obtain it by force."* These stern orders were not strictly executed; yet many Indians were killed, a large number of wigwams were burnt, at Block-Island and on Connecticut river, some corn was destroyed, and other damage was done. The troops returned to Boston, on the 14th of September, without the loss of a man.

This expedition had little effect, except to exasperate the natives. Mr. Endicott was the object of many censures for returning, without striking a severer blow. But his force was small, the winter was approaching, and prudence, undoubtedly, required his return.

The Pequods became more decidedly hostile. They killed several white persons, and made strenuous efforts to induce the powerful Narraganset tribe to forget their mutual animosity, and join with them in a war of extermination against the English. "There had been," says Hutchinson, (vol. i. p. 60) "a fixed, inveterate enmity, between the two tribes; but on this occasion the Pequods were willing to smother it, their enmity against the English being the strongest of the two: and although they had never heard the story of Polypheme and Ulysses, yet they artfully urged, that the English were come to dispossess them of their country, and that all the Narragansets could hope for from their friendship, was the favor of being the last devoured: whereas, if the Indians would unite, they might easily de-

* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 192.

stroy the English, or force them to leave the country, without being exposed themselves to any hazard. They need not come to open battles; firing their houses, killing their cattle, and lying in wait for them as they went about their ordinary business, would soon deprive them of all means of subsisting. But the Narragansets preferred the present pleasure of revenge upon their mortal enemies, to the future happiness of themselves and their posterity."

The chief merit of preventing this league, and thus, perhaps, saving the whites from destruction, is due to Mr. Williams. The magistrates of Massachusetts solicited his mediation with the Narragansets. They did not ask it in vain. Mr. Williams instantly undertook the service, and with much toil, expense and hazard, he succeeded in defeating the endeavors of the Pequods to win over the Narragansets to a coalition against the English. Mr. Williams, in his letter to Major Mason, has incidentally related his agency in this affair. It is due to him, to quote here his own simple and energetic words:

"Upon letters received from the Governor and Council at Boston, requesting me to use my utmost and speediest endeavors to break and hinder the league labored for by the Pequods and Mohegans against the English, (excusing the not sending of company and supplies by the haste of the business) the Lord helped me immediately to put my life into my hand, and, scarce acquainting my wife, to ship myself alone, in a poor canoe, and to cut through a stormy wind, with great seas, every minute in hazard of life, to the sachem's house. Three days and nights my business forced me to lodge and mix with the bloody Pequod ambassadors, whose hands and arms, methought, reeked with the blood of my countrymen, murdered and massacred by them on Connecticut river, and from whom I could not but nightly look for their bloody knives at my own throat also. God wondrously preserved me, and helped me to break to pieces the Pequods' negotiation and design; and to make and finish, by many travels and charges, the English league with the Narragansets and Mohegans against the Pequods."

In consequence of Mr. Williams' agency, the Narraganset sachem, Miantinomo, came to Boston, on the 21st of October, 1636, with two sons of Canonicus, besides another

sachem, and about twenty attendants. He was received with much parade, and a treaty of perpetual peace and alliance was concluded, in which it was stipulated, that neither party should make peace with the Pequods without the consent of the other.* Governor Winthrop mentions a circumstance, which is highly honorable to Mr. Williams, because it proves the confidence which was reposed in him, both by the Indians and by the government of Massachusetts. The treaty was written in the English language, and as it was found difficult to make the Indians understand the articles perfectly, "we agreed," says Winthrop, "to send a copy of them to Mr. Williams, who could best interpret them to them." This measure was probably adopted, at the suggestion of the Indians, who knew that Mr. Williams was their friend, and would neither himself deceive them, nor connive at any attempt at deception on the part of others. It is a proof, also, of the integrity of the Massachusetts rulers, on this occasion, that they were willing to submit their proceedings to the scrutiny of a man, whom they knew to be a steadfast advocate of the rights of the Indians.

The Pequods, though disappointed in their attempts to secure the alliance of the Narragansets, resolved to maintain the conflict single handed. They probably thought, that it was better policy to make one desperate effort to overpower the English, though aided by the Narragansets, than to wait for the gradual approach of that ruin, which they had the forecast to apprehend from the multiplication of the colonists. It was a bold though a hopeless effort. Their undisciplined bravery and simple weapons were unequal to a contest with the military skill and the fire-arms of the English.

The following letter from Mr. Williams to Governor Winthrop was written at some time between August, 1636, and May, 1637.†

* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 199. Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 61. The last article of the treaty provided, that it should continue to the *posterity of both parties*. Our fathers thus treated with the Indians as independent tribes. They did not then dream of the doctrine, that the Indians are mere tenants of the soil, and are under the jurisdiction of the whites.

† 3 His. Col. i. p. 159.

"*New Providence, this 2d day of the week.*

"Sir,

"The latter end of the last week, I gave notice to our neighbor princes of your intentions and preparations against the common enemy, the Pequods. At my first coming to them, Canonicus (morosus æque ac barbarus senex) was very sour, and accused the English and myself for sending the plague amongst them, and threatening to kill him especially.

"Such tidings (it seems) were lately brought to his ears by some of his flatterers and our ill-willers. I discerned cause of bestirring myself, and staid the longer, and at last (through the mercy of the Most High) I not only sweetened his spirit, but possessed him, that the plague and other sicknesses were alone in the hand of the one God, who made him and us, who being displeased with the English for lying, stealing, idleness and uncleanness, (the natives' epidemical sins,) smote many thousands of us ourselves with general and late mortalities.

"Miantinomo kept his barbarous court lately at my house, and with him I have far better dealing. He takes some pleasure to visit me, and sent me word of his coming over again some eight days hence.

"They pass not a week without some skirmishes, though hitherto little loss on either side. They were glad of your preparations, and in much conference with themselves and others, (fishing, de-industria, for instructions from them) I gathered these observations, which you may please (as cause may be) to consider and take notice of:

"1. They conceive, that to do execution to purpose on the Pequods, will require not two or three days and away, but a riding by it and following of the work to and again the space of three weeks or a month; that there be a falling off and a retreat, as if you were departed, and a falling on again within three or four days, when they are returned again to their houses securely from their flight.

"2. That if any pinnaces come in ken, they presently prepare for flight, women and old men and children, to a swamp some three or four miles on the back of them, a marvellous great and secure swamp, which they called Ohomowauke, which signifies owl's nest, and by another name, Cappacommock, which signifies a refuge, or hiding place, as I conceive.

"3. That, therefore, Niantick (which is Miantinomo's place of rendezvous) be thought on for the riding and retiring to of vessel or vessels, which place is faithful to the Narragansets, and at present enmity with the Pequods.

"4. They also conceive it easy for the English, that the provisions and munition first arrive at Aquetneck, called by us Rhode-Island, at the Narraganset's mouth, and then a messenger may be despatched hither, and so to the Bay, for the soldiers to march up by land to the vessels, who otherwise might spend long time about the Cape, and fill more vessels than needs.

"5. That the assault would be in the night, when they are commonly more secure and at home, by which advantage the English, being armed, may enter the houses and do what execution they please.

"6. That before the assault be given, an ambush be laid behind them, between them and the swamp, to prevent their flight, &c.

"7. That to that purpose, such guides as shall be best liked of be taken along to direct, especially two Pequods, viz. Wequash and Wuttackquiackommin, valiant men, especially the latter, who have lived these three or four years with the Narragansets, and know every pass and passage among them, who desire armor to enter their houses.

"8. That it would be pleasing to all natives, that women and children be spared, &c.

"9. That if there be any more land travel to Connecticut, some course would also be taken with the Wunnashowatuckoogs, who are confederates with and a refuge to the Pequods.

"Sir, if any thing be sent to the princes, I find that Canonicus would gladly accept of a box of eight or ten pounds of sugar, and indeed he told me he would thank Mr. Governor for a box full.

"Sir, you may please to take notice of a rude view how the Pequods lie:

[Here follows a rude map of the Pequod and Mohegan country.]

"Thus, with my best salutes to your worthy selves and loving friends with you, and daily cries to the Father of mercies for a merciful issue to all these enterprises, I rest,

"Your worship's unfeignedly respective

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"For his much honored Mr. Governor, and Mr. Winthrop, Deputy Governor, of the Massachusetts, these."

The Pequods now prosecuted the war with all the cruelty of savages. They murdered several individuals, whom they found at work in the fields, or surprised on the rivers; and some of them they put to death with barbarous tortures. They attacked the fort at Saybrook, at the mouth of Connecticut river. They thus spread alarm through the colonies. Massachusetts, Plymouth and Connecticut immediately agreed to invade the Indian territory, with their joint forces, and attempt the entire destruction of the Pequods. Massachusetts accordingly sent 120 men, under General Stoughton, with Mr. Wilson, of Boston, as their chaplain, an indispensable attendant of a military expedition in those days. They marched by the way of Providence, and were hospitably entertained, at that place, by Mr. Williams. His own account of the transaction may be properly quoted: "When the English forces marched up to the Narraganset country, against the Pequods, I gladly entertained at my house, in Providence, the General Stoughton and his officers, and used my utmost care, that all his officers and soldiers should be well accommodated with us."* He accompanied the troops to Narraganset, where, by his influence, he established a mutual confidence between them and the Indians. He then returned to Providence, and acted through the war as a medium of intercourse between the government of Massachusetts, the army and the Indians.

Major Mason, with seventy-seven men from Connecticut and Massachusetts, and several hundred Narraganset and other Indians,† attacked the Pequods, in May, 1637, at Mistick fort, near a river of that name, in the county of New-London, a few miles east of Fort Griswold. In this fort, five or six hundred Pequods, men, women and children, had taken refuge, and had fortified it, as well as their skill

* Letter to Major Mason.

† The principal force from Massachusetts, under General Stoughton, did not arrive till some time after the action. The Plymouth troops did not march, though fifty men were got in readiness, but not till the war was nearly finished. The friendly Indians did very little service, except to intercept some fugitives. The battle was fought by the whites.

would permit, with palisadoes, which offered but a feeble defence, and presented no obstacle to musketry. They made a desperate resistance, but as they were armed only with bows, tomahawks and English hatchets, they killed and wounded but a few of the assailants, while the English troops poured in a destructive fire, and then rushed into the fort, sword in hand. The slaughter was dreadful, the warriors falling by the bullet and the sword, and the old men, women and children perishing in the flames. The action lasted an hour, and terminated in the burning of the fort, and the death of all its inmates, except a few prisoners.

A considerable number of the Pequods were soon after killed in a battle in a great swamp. The tribe was extinguished. Sassacus, the Pequod sachem, fled to the Mohawks, by whom he was murdered. Such of the Pequods as were not killed, were either sent to Bermuda, and sold for slaves, or mingled with the Narragansets and other tribes.* Thus the brave and powerful Pequods disappeared forever, and such was the terror which this victory spread among the savages, that they refrained from open hostilities for nearly forty years. A day of thanksgiving was kept by all the churches in Massachusetts, in commemoration of the victory, from which their soldiers had returned, without the loss of a man killed in battle. The account given by Winthrop is characteristic of those times: "The captains and soldiers who had been in the late ser-

* "It was judged," says Dr. Holmes, (Annals, vol. i. p. 241) "that, during the summer, seven hundred Pequods were destroyed, among whom were thirteen sachems. About two hundred, besides women and children, survived the swamp fight. Of this number, the English gave eighty to Miantinomo, and twenty to Ninigret, two sachems of Narraganset, and the other hundred to Uncas, sachem of the Mohegans, to be received and treated as their men. A number of the male children were sent to Bermuda. However just the occasion of this war, humanity demands a tear on the extinction of a valiant tribe, which preferred death to what it might naturally anticipate from the progress of English settlements—dependence, or extirpation.

'Indulge, my native land! indulge the tear,
That steals, impassion'd, o'er a nation's doom;
To me each twig from Adam's stock, is dear,
And sorrows fall upon an Indian's tomb.'"

Dwight's Greenfield Hill.

vice were feasted, and after the sermon, the magistrates and elders accompanied them to the door of the house where they dined." Miantinomo, the Narraganset sachem, visited Boston, in November, to negotiate with the government, and acknowledged that all the Pequod country and Block-Island belonged to Massachusetts, and promised that he would not meddle with it without their leave.

We have seen the part which Mr. Williams took in this war, and may ascribe to him no small share in producing its favorable termination. Some of the leading men in Massachusetts felt, that he deserved some acknowledgment of gratitude for his services. He says, in his letter to Major Mason, that Governor Winthrop "and some other of the council motioned, and it was debated, whether or no I had not merited, not only to be recalled from banishment, but also to be honored with some mark of favor. It is known who hindered, [alluding, it is supposed, to Mr. Dudley] who never promoted the liberty of other men's consciences."

His principles, however, were not then viewed with more favor than at the time of his banishment; and the fear of their contagious influence overcame the sentiment of gratitude for his magnanimous conduct and invaluable services during the war. It was not himself, so much as his doctrines, which his opponents disliked. To those doctrines they were conscientiously hostile; and they were not the only men who have thought that they did God service, by stifling the generous emotions of the heart, in obedience to the stern dictates of a mistaken sense of duty.

The following letter from Mr. Williams may be properly quoted here. It is supposed to have been written on the 20th of August, 1637. It relates to the affairs of the Indians, and shows that the division of the Pequod captives, and other causes, occasioned some distrust and irritation between the English and the Narragansets. Mr. Williams endeavored to preserve peace and foster friendship among all parties.

"*New Providence, 20th of the 6th.*

"Much honored Sir,

"Yours by Yotaash (Miantinomo's brother) received. I accompanied him to the Narragansets, and having got Canonicus and Miantinomo, with their council, together, I

acquainted them faithfully with the contents of your letter, both grievances and threatenings; and to demonstrate, I produced the copy of the league, (which Mr. Vane sent me) and with breaking of a straw in two or three places, I showed them what they had done.

"In sum their answer was, that they thought they should prove themselves honest and faithful, when Mr. Governor understood their answers; and that (although they would not contend with their friends,) yet they could relate many particulars, wherein the English had broken (since these wars) their promises, &c.

"First, then, concerning the Pequod squaws, Canonicus answered, that he never saw any, but heard of some that came into these parts, and he bade carry them back to Mr. Governor; but since he never heard of them till I came, and now he would have the country searched for them. Miantinomo answered, that he never heard of but six, and four he saw which were brought to him, at which he was angry, and asked why they did not carry them to me, that I might convey them home again. Then he bid the natives that brought them to carry them to me, who, departing, brought him word that the squaws were lame, and they could not travel. Whereupon, he sent me word that I should send for them. This I must acknowledge, that this message I received from him, and sent him word that we were but few here, and could not fetch them nor convey them, and therefore desired him to send men with them, and to seek out the rest. Then, saith he, we were busy ten or twelve days together, as indeed they were, in a strange kind of solemnity, wherein the sachems ate nothing but at night, and all the natives round about the country were feasted. In which time, saith he, I wished some to look to them, which, notwithstanding, at this time, they escaped; and now he would employ men instantly to search all places for them, and within two or three days to convey them home. Besides, he professed that he desired them not, and was sorry the Governor should think he did. I objected, that he sent to beg one. He answered, that Sassamun, being sent by the Governor with letters to Pequod, fell lame, and, lying at his house, told him of a squaw he saw, which was a sachem's daughter, who, while he lived, was his (Miantinomo's) great friend. He therefore de-

sired, in kindness to his dead friend, to beg her, or redeem her.

"Concerning his departure from the English, and leaving them without guides, he answered, first, that they had been faithful, many hundreds of them, (though they were solicited to the contrary;) that they stuck to the English in life or death, without which they were persuaded that Uncas and the Mohegans had proved false, (as he fears they will yet) as also that they never had found a Pequod; and therefore, saith he, sure there was some cause. I desired to know it. He replied in these words, Chenock eiuse wetompatimucks? that is, did ever friends deal so with friends? I urging wherein, he told me this tale: that his brother, Yotaash, had seized upon Puttaquppuunch, Quame, and twenty Pequods, and threescore squaws; they killed three and bound the rest, watching them all night, and sending for the English, delivered them to them in the morning. Miantinomo (who, according to promise, came by land with two hundred men, killing ten Pequods in their march,) was desirous to see the great sachem whom his brother had taken, being now in the English houses; but, saith he, I was thrust at with a pike many times, that I durst not come near the door. I objected, he was not known. He and others affirmed he was, and asked if they should have dealt so with Mr. Governor. I still denied that he was known, &c. Upon this, he saith, all my company were disheartened, and they all, and Cutshamoquene, desired to be gone; and yet, saith he, two of my men (Wagonckwhut and Maunamoh) were their guides to Sesquankit from the river's mouth.

"Sir, I dare not stir coals, but I saw them too much disregarded by many, which their ignorance imputed to all, and thence came the misprision, and blessed be the Lord things were no worse.

"I objected, they received Pequods and wampum without Mr. Governor's consent. Canonicus replied, that although he and Miantinomo had paid many hundred fathom of wampum to their soldiers, as Mr. Governor did, yet he had not received one yard of beads nor a Pequod. Nor, saith Miantinomo, did I, but one small present from four women of Long-Island, which were no Pequods, but of that isle, being afraid, desired to put themselves under my protection.

"By the next I shall add something more of consequence, and which must cause our loving friends of Connecticut to be very watchful, as also, if you please, their grievances, which I have labored already to answer, to preserve the English name; but now end abruptly, with best salutes and earnest prayers for your peace with the God of peace and all men. So praying, I rest,

"Your worship's unfeigned

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"All loving respects to Mrs. Winthrop and yours, as also to Mr. Deputy, Mr. Bellingham, theirs, and Mr. Wilson, &c.

"For his much honored Mr. Governor, these."

CHAPTER XI.

Settlement on Rhode-Island commenced—Mrs. Hutchinson—settlement at Pawtuxet.

The little colony at Providence was rapidly increased by the arrival of persons from the other colonies and from Europe, attracted thither by the freedom which the conscience there enjoyed. So tenaciously was this principle held, that the town disfranchised one of its citizens, for refusing to allow his wife to attend meeting as often as she wished.* This act has been censured, as a deviation from

* Backus, vol. i. p. 95. "None might have a voice in government in this new plantation, who would not allow this liberty. Hence, about this time, I found the following town act, viz. "It was agreed, that Joshua Verin, upon breach of covenant, for restraining liberty of conscience, shall be withheld from liberty of voting, till he shall declare the contrary." Verin left the town, and his absence seems to have been considered as a forfeiture of his land, for in 1650, he wrote the following letter to the town, claiming his property. The town replied, that if he would come and prove his title, he should receive the land.

"Gentlemen and countrymen of the town of Providence:

"This is to certify you, that I look upon my purchase of the town of Providence to be my lawful right. In my travel, I have inquired, and do find it is recoverable according to law; for my coming away could not disinherit me. Some of you cannot but recollect, that we six which came first should have the first convenience, as it was put in practice by our house lots, and 2d by the meadow in Wanasquatucket river, and then those that were admitted by us unto the purchase to have the next which were about; but it is contrary to law, reason and equity, for to dispose of my part without my consent. Therefore deal not worse with me than we dealt with the Indians, for we made conscience of purchasing of it of them, and hazarded our lives. Therefore we need not, nor any one of us ought to be denied of our purchase. So hoping you will take it into serious consideration, and to give me reasonable satisfaction, I rest,

"Yours in the way of right and equity,

"JOSHUA VERIN.

"From Salem, the 21st Nov. 1650.

"This be delivered to the deputies of the town of Providence, to be presented to the whole town."

Winthrop's account of this affair (vol. i. p. 252) under the date of December 13, 1638, is a good specimen of the manner in which that great and good man was biassed by his feelings, when he spoke

their principles, because it inflicted a civil punishment on a man, for conduct which he might allege to have sprung from conscientious scruples. But this inconsistency, if it was such, was an error on the right side. The woman might have failed in duty to her husband, by an obstinate contempt of his just authority, and a disregard of his reasonable wishes. But the inhabitants of Providence were right in adhering to the great principle, that our duties to God are paramount to all human obligations; and that the right to worship him, in the manner which we deem most acceptable to him, is not, and cannot be, surrendered, even by the marriage covenant.

A settlement was made, in 1637–8, at Portsmouth, on the north side of the island which gives name to the State. The settlers were, like Mr. Williams and his companions, exiles or emigrants from Massachusetts. The cause of their removal may be traced to the singular ferment which arose in Massachusetts, on account of Mrs. Hutchinson.

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of Rhode-Island. The account must have been founded on reports, perhaps on mere gossip:

"At Providence, also, the devil was not idle. For whereas, at their first coming thither, Mr. Williams and the rest did make an order, that no man should be molested for his conscience, now men's wives, and children, and servants, claimed liberty hereby to go to all religious meetings, though never so often, or though private, upon the week days; and because one Verin refused to let his wife go to Mr. Williams so oft as she was called for, they required to have him censured. But there stood up one Arnold, a witty man of their own company, and withstood it, telling them, that when he consented to that order, he never intended it should extend to the breach of any ordinance of God, such as the subjection of wives to their husbands, &c. and gave divers solid reasons against it. Then one Greene, (who hath married the wife of one Beggerly, whose husband is living, and no divorce, &c. but only, it was said, that he had lived in adultery and had confessed it,) he replied, that if they should restrain their wives, &c. all the women in the country would cry out of them, &c. Arnold answered him thus: Did you pretend to leave Massachusetts because you would not offend God to please men, and would you now break an ordinance and commandment of God, to please women? Some were of opinion, that if Verin would not suffer his wife to have her liberty, the church should dispose her to some other man who would use her better. Arnold told them, it was not the woman's desire to go so oft from home, but only Mr. Williams' and others. In conclusion, when they would have censured Verin, Arnold told them, that it was against their own order, for Verin did that he did out of conscience; and their order was, that no man should be censured for his conscience."

This lady, with her husband, came to Boston, from England, in 1636. She possessed talents, which she appears to have felt no reluctance to display. She was treated with great respect by Mr. Cotton, and by other distinguished individuals, particularly by Governor Vane. It was the custom of the members of the church to meet every week, to repeat Mr. Cotton's sermons, and converse on religious doctrines. Mrs. Hutchinson commenced a meeting of the females, in which she repeated the sermons, with her own comments. Her eloquence was admired, and her meetings were thronged. Her vanity was inflamed, and she proceeded to announce opinions and doctrines, which soon became the topic of conversation, and the source of vehement contentions throughout the colony. Parties were formed, among the ministers as well as the people; Mr. Cotton himself being inclined to the side of Mrs. Hutchinson, while most of the ministers and magistrates opposed her. The opinions ascribed to her related to such points as the nature of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the person of the believer, and the connection between sanctification and justification. From these opinions others, still more heretical, were supposed to flow, and, as usually happens, the inferences which men chose to form were considered as substantial errors actually held by Mrs. Hutchinson.*

The alarm spread through the colony. The ministers thronged to Boston, to confer with Mr. Cotton and others. Long discussions ensued, without effect, and at length it was resolved to try the virtue of a general synod. It was accordingly held at Newtown, (now Cambridge) on the 30th of August, 1637, and was attended not only by all the ministers and messengers of the churches, but by the magistrates. Three weeks were spent in debates, during which the mild spirit of Winthrop often interposed to soften

* "Every man and woman, who had brains enough to form some imperfect conception of them, inferred and maintained some other point, such as these: a man is justified before he believes; faith is no cause of justification; and if faith be before justification, it is only passive faith, an empty vessel, &c. and assurance is by immediate revelation only. The fear of God and love of our neighbor seemed to be laid by, and out of the question." Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 59.

the asperity of controversy. The synod collected, with great industry, all the erroneous opinions then to be found in the country, amounting to eighty-two, and finished its session, by condemning these errors, and pronouncing its judgment on certain points of church discipline.*

The effect of the synod was the usual one, of increasing the pertinacity with which the different parties held their opinions. Mrs. Hutchinson continued her lectures, and nearly all the members of the Boston church became her converts. She forsook the public assemblies, and set up a meeting in her own house. She accused the greater part of the ministers in the country as preachers of error. The civil power now interposed, to apply the remedy for heresy, which has often been used, when argument had failed. Mrs. Hutchinson was summoned before the General Court, and many of the ministers. She was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to be banished. The church excommunicated her, though she is said to have recanted her errors. Rev. Mr. Wheelwright, her brother-in-law, who had publicly espoused her cause, was likewise banished.

The Court proceeded to a more extraordinary measure. Nearly sixty citizens of Boston, and a number in other towns, were required to surrender their arms and ammunition to a person appointed by the Court, under a penalty of ten pounds; and were forbidden, under the same penalty, to buy or borrow any arms or ammunition until further orders. The pretence, as set forth in the act,† was a fear, that the principles which they had learned of Mrs. Hutchinson and Mr. Wheelwright might impel them to disturb the peace of the community, as certain persons in Germany had done. Though anabaptism is not named, it is easy to perceive, that this dreadful phantom, which so haunted the imaginations of our ancestors, was, on this, as on other

* One of these decisions of the synod will be approved by the good sense of Christians in this age. "That though women might meet (some few together) to pray and edify one another, yet such a set assembly, (as was then in practice in Boston) where sixty or more did meet every week, and one woman (in a prophetical way, by resolving questions of doctrine and expounding Scripture) took upon her the whole exercise, was agreed to be disorderly, and without rule." Winthrop, vol. i. p. 240.

† Backus, vol. i. 86.

occasions, made the apology for oppressive measures. That it was a mere pretext, in this case, we have the best reason to believe, for Winthrop* honestly attributes the act of disarming these men, to the part which most of them had taken in a remonstrance to the General Court against its measures in relation to Mr. Wheelwright. The act itself proves the same point, for it provides, that if any of them would acknowledge their guilt in signing the "seditious libel," they should be exempted from its operation. The General Court was as jealous of its prerogatives as King James I.; and to prevent these individuals from expressing their disapprobation by acts more energetic than a remonstrance, the Court thought it prudent to deprive them of offensive weapons. By an act, passed at the same session, a severe punishment was decreed for those persons who should speak evil of the judges or magistrates.

These transactions have been recited, not only from their connection with the settlement of Rhode-Island, but because they furnish ample illustrations of the multiform mischiefs which ensue from an interference by the civil magistrate in the affairs of the church. Had Mrs. Hutchinson been permitted, without notice, to expound and prophecy as she pleased, it is probable that her zeal would have soon spent itself, if unsupplied with fuel by her vanity. Or if she had been left to the salutary discipline of the church, as she would now be, no serious effects would have followed. But the injudicious excitement among the clergy, and still more, the improper conduct of the magistrates, gave importance to the affair, and produced a convulsion in the Commonwealth, which would have ruined a community less intelligent and pious, and the perils of which may be inferred from the act of the General Court, disarming a portion of its citizens. The Court, having assumed the office of inquisitors into the religious opinions of men, was forced, by a regard to consistency, to prosecute its measures to the end, and punish the heretics by disfranchisement and expulsion from the Commonwealth. Thus were the affections of many of the inhabitants alienated from each other, and from the government, and the colony was deprived of a large number of its citizens.

* Vol. i. p. 247.

But God, whose high prerogative it is to educe good from evil, made this unhappy feud in Massachusetts the occasion of establishing a new settlement on Rhode-Island. Many of the individuals who had been disarmed, and others who were banished, removed from Massachusetts. Some of them went to Connecticut, others to New-Hampshire, and several to Providence. But a number of persons, among whom was John Clarke, a learned physician, agreed to migrate together, and requested him and some others to select a suitable place. They accordingly proceeded to New-Hampshire, in the autumn or winter of 1637, the preceding summer having been so warm as to induce them to seek a more northerly position. But the severity of the winter in New-Hampshire turned their thoughts towards a more genial clime. Mr. Clarke and his associates accordingly proceeded southward, with a design to settle on Long-Island, or on *Delaware Bay*. But at Providence, they were kindly received by Mr. Williams, who advised them to form a settlement at Sowams (now called Barrington, a few miles from Providence) or at Aquetneck,* (now called Rhode-Island.) But as they had resolved to remove beyond the limits both of Plymouth and of Massachusetts, Mr. Williams, Mr. Clarke, and two others went to Plymouth, to ascertain whether they claimed either of these places. They were treated with respect at Plymouth, and were informed, that Sowams was claimed by that colony, but that Aquetneck was out of their jurisdiction.

They returned to Providence, and on the 7th of March, 1637–8, the following instrument was drawn up, and signed by nineteen individuals, all but two of whom were named in the act to disarm certain citizens of Massachusetts:

"We, whose names are underwritten, do swear, solemnly, in the presence of Jehovah, to incorporate ourselves into a body politic, and as he shall help us, will submit our persons, lives and estates unto our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and to all those most perfect

* This word is spelled by different writers, in various ways. The island was afterwards (in 1644, according to Callender,) called the Isle of Rhodes, and by an easy declension, Rhode-Island. (Holmes, vol. i. p. 246.) In a letter of Roger Williams, already quoted, written before May, 1637, the name *Rode*-Island is applied to it. The reason does not appear. A fancied resemblance to the Isle of Rhodes is supposed to have been the origin.

and absolute laws of his, given us in his holy word of truth, to be guided and judged thereby.

Thomas Savage,	William Coddington,
William Dyer,	John Clarke,
William Freeborne,	William Hutchinson,
Philip Sherman,	John Coggeshall,
John Walker,	William Aspinwall,
Richard Carder,	Samuel Wilbore,
William Baulstone,	John Porter,
Edward Hutchinson, Sen.	Edward Hutchinson, Jr.
Henry Bull,	John Sanford."
Randall Holden,	

By the friendly assistance of Mr. Williams, Aquetneck and other islands in the Narraganset Bay, were purchased of the sachems, Canonicus and Miantinomo, on consideration of forty fathoms of white beads. The deed of cession was signed by the sachems, March 24, 1637–8.*

* This deed is as follows: (Backus, vol. i. pp. 180–1.)

"The 24th of the first month, called March, in the year (so commonly called) 1637–8, Memorandum, that we, Canonicus and Miantinomo, the two chief sachems of the Narraganset, by virtue of our general command of this bay, as also the particular subjecting of the dead sachems of Aquetneck and Kitackamuckqut, themselves and lands unto us, have sold to Mr. Coddington and his friends united unto him, the great island of Aquetneck, lying hence eastward in this bay, as also the marsh or grass upon Canonicut, and the rest of the islands in this bay (excepting Chibachuwesa [Prudence] formerly sold to Mr. Winthrop, the now Governor of the Massachusetts, and Mr. Williams, of Providence) also the grass upon the rivers and bounds about Kitackamackqut, and from thence to Paupusquatch, for the full payment of forty fathoms of white beads, to be equally divided between us; in witness whereof, we have here subscribed. Item, that by giving, by Miantinomo's hands, ten coats and twenty hoes to the present inhabitants, they shall remove themselves from off the island before next winter.

"Witness our hands,
"The mark (†) of CANONICUS.
"The mark (‡) of MIANTINOMO.

"In presence of
"The mark (X) of Yotaash,
"Roger Williams,
"Randall Holden,
"The mark (‡) of Assotemuit,
"The mark (||) of Mihammoh, Canonicus his son.

"Memorandum, that Ousamequin freely consents, that Mr. William Coddington and his friends united unto him, shall make use of any grass or trees on the main land on Pawakasick side, and all my

The natives who resided at Aquetneck soon after agreed, on receiving ten coats and twenty hoes, to remove before the next winter.*

On the beautiful island, the adventurers commenced their settlement, under the simple compact which we have quoted. The northern part of the island was first occupied, and called Portsmouth. The number of the colonists being increased during the summer, a portion of the inhabitants removed the next spring, to the southwestern part of the island, where they commenced the town of Newport. Both towns, however, were considered as belonging to the same colony. In imitation of the form of government which existed for a time among the Jews, the inhabitants chose Mr. Coddington to be their magistrate, with the title of Judge; and a few months afterwards, they elected three elders,† to assist him. This form of government continued till March 12, 1640, when they chose Mr. Coddington, Governor; Mr. Brenton, Deputy Governor; and Messrs. Easton, Coggeshall, William Hutchinson, and John Porter, assistants; Robert Jefferies, Treasurer, and William Dyer, Secretary. This form of government continued, till the charter was obtained. The fertility of the soil, and the pleasantness of the climate, soon attracted many people to the settlement, and the island in a few years became so populous, as to send out colonists to the adjacent shores.‡

To this settlement, Mr. Hutchinson, with his family,

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men, to the said Mr. Coddington, and English, his friends united to him, having received of Mr. Coddington five fathoms of wampum, as gratuity for himself and the rest.

"The mark (X) of OUSAMEQUIN.

"Witness, { ROGER WILLIAMS, RANDALL HOLDEN.

"Dated the 6th of the fifth month, 1638."

* Mr. Callender says, (His. Dis. p. 32,) "The English inhabited between two powerful nations, the Wampanoags to the north and east, who had formerly possessed some part of their grants, before they had surrendered it to the Narragansets, and though they freely owned the submission, yet it was thought best by Mr. Williams to make them easy by gratuities to the sachem, his counsellors and followers. On the other side, the Narragansets were very numerous, and the natives inhabiting any spot the English sat down upon, or improved, were all to be bought off to their content, and oftentimes were to be paid over and over again."

† Messrs. Nicholas Easton, John Coggeshall and William Brenton.

‡ Holmes, vol. i. p. 246.

removed from Massachusetts. There is no evidence that Mrs. Hutchinson occasioned any disturbance at Rhode-Island. Her husband was elected one of the assistants, in 1640. He died in 1642, and his wife, for some reason not satisfactorily explained, removed to the neighborhood of New-York, where she was killed by the Indians, the next year, with all the members of her family, amounting to sixteen persons, except one daughter, who was carried into captivity.

It is proper to mention in this place, with special honor the important aid of Mr. Williams in founding this settlement. With that prompt humanity, which always distinguished him, he used all his influence on behalf of this band of exiles; and it was, without question, his intimacy and favor with the sachems which procured the cession of Aquetneck. He himself asserted this fact, in a letter written in 1658:

"I have acknowledged (and have and shall endeavor to maintain) the rights and properties of every inhabitant of Rhode-Island in peace; yet since there is so much sound and noise of purchase and purchasers, I judge it not unseasonable to declare the rise and bottom of the planting of Rhode-Island in the fountain of it. It was not price nor money that could have purchased Rhode-Island. Rhode-Island was obtained by love; by the love and favor which that honorable gentleman, Sir Henry Vane, and myself, had with that great sachem Miantinomo, about the league which I procured between the Massachusetts English, &c. and the Narragansets, in the Pequod war. It is true, I advised a gratuity to be presented to the sachem and the natives; and because Mr. Coddington and the rest of my loving countrymen were to inhabit the place, and to be at the charge of the gratuities, I drew up a writing in Mr. Coddington's name, and in the names of such of my loving countrymen as came up with him, and put it into as sure a form as I could at that time (amongst the Indians) for the benefit and assurance of the present and future inhabitants of the island. This I mention, that as that truly noble Sir Henry Vane hath been so great an instrument in the hand of God for procuring of this island from the barbarians, as also for procuring and confirming of the charter, so it may by all due thankful acknowledgment be remembered and recorded of us and ours, which reap and

enjoy the sweet fruits of so great benefits, and such unheard of liberties amongst us." Backus, vol. i. p. 91.

"In another manuscript, (says Mr. Benedict, vol. i. p. 459) he tells us, "The Indians were very shy and jealous of selling the lands to any, and chose rather to make a grant of them to such as they affected; but at the same time, expected such gratuities and rewards as made an Indian gift oftentimes a very dear bargain." "And the colony in 1666," says Mr. Callender, "averred, that though the favor Mr. Williams had with Miantinomo was the great means of procuring the grants of the land, yet the purchase had been dearer than of any lands in New-England."

Mr. Williams' conduct on this occasion was worthy of his character, and entitled him to more gratitude than he seems to have received from some of the objects of his good offices.

About this time, a number of the inhabitants of Providence, among whom was Mr. Benedict Arnold, removed to Pawtuxet, a place four miles south of Providence, and included within the territory ceded to Mr. Williams. These individuals were doubtless induced to fix their residence there, by the luxuriant meadows on the banks of the river, which furnished pasture for their cattle.

CHAPTER XII.

Condition of Providence—execution of three murderers of an Indian—birth of Mr. Williams' eldest son.

We have seen Mr. Williams, though burdened by the toils and privations of a new settlement, generously devoting his time and property to rescue his countrymen from destruction by the Pequods; and assisting to establish a new colony at Rhode-Island. His own settlement at Providence was, in the mean while, increasing. The measures adopted in Massachusetts, in relation to Mrs. Hutchinson and her adherents, made Providence a welcome place of refuge to some of the fugitives. The temper of Massachusetts towards the settlement is shown in an act of the General Court, March 12, 1637–8, virtually prohibiting any of the inhabitants of Providence from coming into Massachusetts.*

This act operated with much severity, for the colonists were dependent on Boston for supplies from abroad. Mr. Williams complained, that he had suffered the loss of many thousand pounds, in his "trading with English and natives, being debarred from Boston, the chief mart and port of New-England."† The writer of the History of Provi-

* "While the General Court sat, there came a letter directed to the Court from John Greene, of Providence, who, not long before, had been imprisoned and fined for saying, that the magistrates had usurped upon the power of Christ in his church, and had persecuted Mr. Williams and another, whom they had banished for disturbing the peace, by divulging their opinions against the authority of the magistrates, &c.; but upon his submission, &c. his fine was remitted; and now, by his letter, he retracted his former submission, and charged the Court as he had done before. Now, because the Court knew, that divers others of Providence were of the same ill-affection to the Court, and were, probably, suspected to be confederate in the same letter, the Court ordered, that if any of that plantation were found within our jurisdiction, he should be brought before one of the magistrates, and if he would not disclaim the charge in the said letter, he should be sent home, and charged to come no more into this jurisdiction, upon pain of imprisonment and further censure." Winthrop, vol. i. p. 256.

† Letter to Major Mason.

dence attributes the want of written memorials of the first settlers to the scarcity of paper, observing, that "the first of their writings that are to be found, appear on small scraps of paper, wrote as thick, and crowded as full as possible." This scarcity of an article, which could be procured from Europe only, would be a natural consequence of an exclusion from the only port nearer than New-York, which vessels from abroad then visited. But articles of still greater necessity could not be obtained in the colonies, and the inconvenience, if not suffering, occasioned by such an exclusion, can scarcely be imagined in the present age.

But no injuries to himself or his fellow colonists could provoke Mr. Williams to refuse his good offices with the Indians. About June, 1638, the following letter was written by him to Governor Winthrop:*

"Sir,

"I perceive, by these your last thoughts, that you have received many accusations and hard conceits of this poor native Miantinomo, wherein I see the vain and empty puff of all terrene promotions, his barbarous birth or greatness being much honored, confirmed and augmented (in his own conceit) by the solemnity of his league with the English, and his more than ordinary entertainment, &c. now all dashed in a moment in the frowns of such in whose friendship and love lay his chief advancement.

"Sir, of the particulars, some concerning him only, some Canonicus and the rest of the sachems, some all the natives, some myself.

"For the sachems, I shall go over speedily, and acquaint them with particulars. At present, let me still find this favor in your eyes, as to obtain an hearing, for that your love hath never denied me, which way soever your judgment hath been (I hope, and I know you will one day see it,) and been carried.

"Sir, let this barbarian be proud, and angry, and covetous, and filthy, hating and hateful, (as ourselves have been till kindness from heaven pitied us, &c.) yet let me humbly beg belief, that for myself, I am not yet turned Indian,

* 3 His. Col. i. p. 166.

to believe all barbarians tell me, nor so basely presumptuous as to trouble the eyes and hands of such (and so honored and dear) with shadows and fables. I commonly guess shrewdly at what a native utters, and, to my remembrance, never wrote particular, but either I know the bottom of it, or else I am bold to give a hint of my suspense.

" Sir, therefore, in some things at present, (begging your wonted gentleness toward my folly) give me leave to show you how I clear myself from such a lightness.

" I wrote lately (for that you please to begin with) that some Pequods (and some of them actual murderers of the English, and that also after the fort was cut off,) were now in your hands. Not only love, but conscience forced me to send, and speedily, on purpose, by a native, mine own servant. I saw not, and spake not with Miantinomo, nor any from him. I write before the All-Seeing Eye. But thus it was. A Narraganset man (Awetipimo) coming from the Bay with cloth, turned in (as they use to do) to me for lodging. I questioned of Indian passages, &c. He tells me Uncas was come with near upon forty natives. I asked what present he brought. He told me that Cutshamoquene had four fathom and odd of him, and forty was for Mr. Governor. I asked him how many Pequods. He told me six. I asked him if they were known. He said Uncas denied that there were any Pequods, and said they were Mohegans all. I asked if himself knew any of them. He answered he did, and so did other Indians of Narraganset. I asked if the murderer of whom I wrote, Pamatesick, were there. He answered he was, and (I further inquiring) he was confident it was he, for he knew him as well as me, &c.

" All this news (by this providence) I knew before ever it came to Narraganset. Upon this I sent, indeed fearing guilt to my own soul, both against the Lord and my countrymen. But see a stranger hand of the Most and Only Wise. Two days after, Uncas passeth by within a mile of me (though he should have been kindly welcome.) One of his company (Wequaumugs) having hurt his foot, and disabled from travel, turns in to me; whom lodging, I question, and find him by father a Narraganset, by mother a Mohegan, and so freely entertained by both. I further inquiring, he told me he went from Mohegan to the Bay

with Uncas. He told me how he had presented forty fathom (to my remembrance) to Mr. Governor (four and upwards to Cutshamoquene,) who would not receive them, but asked twice for Pequods. At last, at Newton, Mr. Governor received them, and was willing that the Pequods should live, such as were at Mohegan, subject to the English sachems at Connecticut, to whom they should carry tribute, and such Pequods as were at Narraganset to Mr. Governor, and all the runaways at Mohegan to be sent back. I asked him how many Pequods were at Narraganset. He said but two, who were Miantinomo's captives, and that at Niantick with Wequash Cook were about three score. I asked, why he said the Indians at Narraganset were to be the Governor's subjects. He said, because Niantick was sometimes so called, although there hath been of late no coming of Narraganset men thither. I asked him if he heard all this. He said that himself and the body of the company stayed about Cutshamoquene's. I asked how many Pequods were among them. He said six. I desired him to name them, which he did thus: Pametesick, Weeaugonhick, (another of those murderers) Makunnete, Kishkontuckqua, Sausawpona, Qussaumpowan, which names I presently wrote down, and (pace vestra dixerim) I am as confident of the truth as that I breathe. Again, (not to be too bold in all the particulars at this time) what a gross and monstrous untruth is that concerning myself, which your love and wisdom to myself a little espy, and I hope see malice and falsehood, (far from the fear of God) whispering together? I have long held it will-worship to doff and don to the Most High in worship; and I wish also, that in civil worship, others were as far from such a vanity, though I hold it not utterly unlawful in some places. Yet surely, amongst the barbarians (the highest in the world,) I would rather lose my head than so practise, because I judge it my duty to set them better copies, and should sin against my own persuasions and resolutions.

"Sir, concerning the islands Prudence and (Patmos, if some had not hindered) Aquetneck, be pleased to understand your great mistake: neither of them were sold properly, for a thousand fathom would not have bought either, by strangers. The truth is, not a penny was demanded

for either, and what was paid was only gratuity, though I chose, for better assurance and form, to call it sale.

"And, alas! (though I cannot conceive you can aim at the sachems) they have ever conceived that myself and Mr. Coddington (whom they knew so many years a sachem at Boston) were far from being rejected by yourselves, as you please to write, for if the Lord had not hid it from their eyes, I am sure you had not been thus troubled by myself at present. Yet the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof. His infinite wisdom and pity be pleased to help you all, and all that desire to fear his name and tremble at his word in this country, to remember that we are all rejected of our native soil, and more to mind the many strong bands, with which we are all tied, than any particular distastes each against the other, and to remember that excellent precept, Prov. 25, If thine enemy hunger, feed him, &c. for thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and Jehovah shall reward thee; unto whose mercy and tender compassions I daily commend you, desirous to be more and ever,

"Your worship's unfeigned and faithful,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"Sir, mine own and wife's respective salutes to your dear companion and all yours; as also to Mr. Deputy, Mr. Bellingham, and other loving friends.

"I am bold to enclose this paper, although the passages may not be new, yet they may refresh your memories in these English Scotch distractions, &c.

"For his much honored and beloved Mr. Governor of Massachusetts, these."

In August, 1638, his aid was again solicited by Massachusetts. Winthrop says, under that date, "Janemoh, the sachem of Niantick, had gone to Long-Island, and rifled some of those Indians which were tributaries to us. The sachems complained to our friends of Connecticut, who wrote us about it, and sent Captain Mason, with seven men, to require satisfaction. The Governor of the Massachusetts wrote also to Mr. Williams, to treat with Miantinomo about satisfaction, or otherwise to bid them look for war.

Upon this Janemoh went to Connecticut, and made his peace, and gave full satisfaction for all injuries."*

About this time, an event occurred, which deserves to be related, both on account of Mr. Williams' connection with it, and because it is in a high degree honorable to the justice and integrity of the colonists, in their transactions with the natives.

Four young men, of Plymouth, who were servants, having absconded from their masters, attacked an Indian, at Pawtucket, near Providence, but within the limits of Plymouth colony. After inflicting upon him a mortal wound, they robbed him of a quantity of wampum, and fled to Providence. Here they were received by Mr. Williams, with his usual hospitality, he being then ignorant of their character and their crime, and supposing that they were, as they pretended, travellers to Connecticut. He furnished them with letters and a guide; but after their departure, he was informed of the atrocious act which they had perpetrated. He immediately despatched messengers to apprehend them, and went himself, with two or three others, in search of the wounded Indian. They carried him to Providence, and endeavored to preserve his life; but in vain. The murderers fled to Newport, where, in consequence of information from Mr. Williams, they were arrested. Mr. Coddington being absent, they were sent to Providence. Mr. Williams was at a loss to determine, whether they ought to be tried at Newport, where they were taken, or at Plymouth, to which they belonged. He accordingly wrote to Governor Winthrop, to ask his advice. The following letter, written about August, 1638, contains, among other things, an account of these transactions:†

"Much honored Sir,

"The bearer lodging with me, I am bold to write an hasty advertisement concerning late passages. For himself, it seems he was fearful to go farther than forty miles about us, especially considering that no natives are willing to accompany him to Pequod or Mohegan, being told by two

* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 267. In the Journal, there are repeated allusions to information received from Mr. Williams, respecting the Indians, and services rendered by him. See vol. i pp. 225, 226, &c.

† 3 His. Col. i. p. 170–3.

Pequods (the all of Miantinomo's captives which are not run from him) what he might expect, &c.

"Sir, Capt. Mason and Thomas Stanton, landing at Narraganset, and at Miantinomo's denouncing war within six days against Janemoh, for they say that Miantinomo hath been fair in all the passages with them, Janemoh sent two messengers to myself, requesting counsel. I advised him to go over with beads and satisfy, &c.

"He sent four Indians. By them Mr. Haynes writes me, that they confess fifteen fathom there received at Long-Island. Thereabout they confessed to me (four being taken of Pequods by force, and restored again,) as also that the islanders say fifty-one fathom, which sum he demanded, as also that the Niantick messengers laid down twenty-six fathom and a half, which was received in part, with declaration that Janemoh should within ten days bring the rest himself, or else they were resolved for war, &c. I have therefore sent once and again to Janemoh, to persuade himself to venture, &c. Canonicus sent a principal man last night to me, in haste and secrecy, relating that Wequash had sent word that if Janemoh went over he should be killed, but I assure them the contrary, and persuade Canonicus to importune and hasten Janemoh within his time, ten days, withal hoping and writing back persuasions of better things to Mr. Haynes, proffering myself, (in case that Janemoh through fear or folly fail) to take a journey and negotiate their business, and save blood, whether the natives' or my countrymen's.

"Sir, there hath been great hubbub in all these parts, as a general persuasion that the time was come of a general slaughter of natives, by reason of a murder committed upon a native within twelve miles of us, four days since, by four desperate English. I presume particulars have scarce as yet been presented to your hand. The last 5th day, toward evening, a native, passing through us, brought me word, that at Pawtucket, a river four miles from us toward the Bay, four Englishmen were almost famished. I sent instantly provisions, and strong water, with invitation, &c. The messengers brought word, that they were one Arthur Peach, of Plymouth, an Irishman, John Barnes, his man, and two others come from Pascataquack, travelling to Connecticut; that they had been lost five days, and

fell into our path but six miles. Whereas they were importuned to come home, &c. they pleaded soreness in travelling, and therefore their desire to rest there.

"The next morning they came to me by break of day, relating that the old man at Pawtucket had put them forth the last night, because that some Indians said, that they had hurt an Englishman, and therefore that they lay between us and Pawtucket.

"I was busy in writing letters and getting them a guide to Connecticut, and inquired no more, they having told me, that they came from Plymouth on the last of the week in the evening, and lay still in the woods the Lord's day, and then lost their way to Weymouth, from whence they lost their way again towards us, and came in again six miles off Pawtucket.

"After they were gone, an old native comes to me and tells me, that the natives round about us were fled, relating that those four had slain a native, who had carried three beaver skins and beads for Canonicus' son, and came home with five fathom and three coats; that three natives which came after him found him groaning in the path; that he told them that four Englishmen had slain him. They came to Pawtucket and inquired after the English, which when Arthur and his company heard, they got on hose and shoes and departed in the night.

"I sent after them to Narraganset, and went myself with two or three more to the wounded in the woods. The natives at first were shy of us, conceiving a general slaughter, but, (through the Lord's mercy) I assured them that Mr. Governor knew nothing, &c. and that I had sent to apprehend the men. So we found that he had been run through the leg and the belly with one thrust. We dressed him and got him to town next day, where Mr. James and Mr. Greene endeavored, all they could, his life; but his wound in the belly, and blood lost, and fever following, cut his life's thread.

"Before he died, he told me, that the four English had slain him, and that, (being faint and not able to speak) he had related the truth to the natives who first came to him, viz. that they, viz. the English, saw him in the Bay and his beads; that sitting in the side of a swamp a little way out of the path (I went to see the place, fit for an evil

purpose) Arthur called him to drink tobacco, who coming and taking the pipe of Arthur, Arthur run him through the leg into the belly, when, springing back, he, Arthur, made the second thrust, but missed him, and his weapon run into the ground; that getting from them a little way into the swamp, they pursued him, till he fell down, when they missed him, and getting up again, when he heard them close by him, he run to and again in the swamp, till he fell down again, when they lost him quite; afterwards, towards night, he came and lay in the path, that some passenger might help him as aforesaid.

"Whereas they said, they wandered Plymouth way, Arthur knew the path, having gone it twice; and besides Mr. Throckmorton met them about Naponset river in the path, who, riding roundly upon a sudden by them, was glad he had past them, suspecting them. They denied that they met Mr. Thockmorton.

"The messenger that I sent to Narraganset, pursuing after them, returned the next day, declaring that they showed Miantinomo's letters to Aquetneck (which were mine to Connecticut) and so to Aquetneck they past, whither I sent information of them, and so they were taken. Their sudden examination they sent me, a copy of which I am bold to send your worship enclosed.

"The islanders (Mr. Coddington) being absent, resolved to send them to us, some thought, by us to Plymouth, from whence they came. Sir, I shall humbly crave your judgment, whether they ought not to be tried where they are taken. If they be sent any where, whether not to Plymouth. In case Plymouth refuse, and the islanders send them to us, what answers we may give, if others, unjustly shift them unto us. I know that every man, quatenus man, and son of Adam, is his brother's keeper or avenger; but I desire to do bonum bene, &c.

"Thus, beseeching the God of heaven, most holy and only wise, to make the interpretation of his own holy meaning in all occurrences, to bring us all by these bloody passages to a higher price of the blood of the Son of God, yea of God, by which the chosen are redeemed, with all due respects to your dear self and dear companion, I cease.

"Your worship's most unworthy,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"This native, Will, my servant, shall attend your worship for answer.

"My due respect to Mr. Deputy, Mr. Bellingham, &c."

Governor Winthrop advised him to send the prisoners to Plymouth. He complied, and three of them (the fourth having effected his escape) were there tried for murder. They confessed the crime, and were hung at Plymouth, in the presence of Mr. Williams, and many of the natives. Two died penitents, especially Arthur Peach, an Irishman, "a young man (says Governor Winthrop) of good parentage and fair condition, and who had done very good service against the Pequods."

The following letter of Mr. Williams belongs to this period. It was addressed to Governor Winthrop:*

"Much honored Sir,

"Through the mercy of the Most High, I am newly returned from a double journey to Connecticut and Plymouth. I shall presume on your wonted love and gentleness, to present you with a short relation of what issue it pleased the Lord to produce out of them, especially since your worship's name was in some way engaged in both.

"I went up to Connecticut with Miantinomo, who had a guard of upwards of one hundred and fifty men, and many sachems, and his wife and children with him. By the way (lodging from his house three nights in the woods) we met divers Narraganset men complaining of robbery and violence which they had sustained from the Pequods and Mohegans, in their travel from Connecticut; as also some of the Wunnashowatuckoogs (subject to Canonicus) came to us and advertised, that two days before, about six hundred and sixty Pequods, Mohegans and their confederates, had robbed them, and spoiled about twenty-three fields of corn, and rifled four Narraganset men amongst them; and also that they lay in way and wait to stop Miantinomo's passage to Connecticut, and divers of them threatened to boil him in a kettle.

"This tidings being many ways confirmed, my company, Mr. Scott, (a Suffolk man,) and Mr. Cope, advised our stop and return back; unto which I also advised the

* 3 His. Col. i. 173–7. The letter was written about Sept. 1638.

whole company, to prevent bloodshed, resolving to get up to Connecticut by water, hoping there to stop such courses. But Miantinomo and his council resolved, (being then about fifty miles, half way, on our journey,) that not a man should turn back, resolving rather all to die, keeping strict watch by night, and in dangerous places a guard by day about the sachems, Miantinomo and his wife, who kept the path, myself and company always first, and on either side of the path forty or fifty men to prevent sudden surprisals. This was their Indian march.

"But it pleased the Father of mercies, that (as we since heard) we came not by, till two days after the time given out by Miantinomo, (by reason of staying for me until the Lord's day was over) as also the Lord sent a rumor of great numbers of the English, in company with the Narragansets, so that we came safe to Connecticut.

"Being arrived, Uncas had sent messengers that he was lame, and could not come. Mr. Haynes said it was a lame excuse, and sent earnestly for him, who at last came, and being charged by Mr. Haynes with the late outrages, one of his company said, they were but an hundred men. He said he was with them, but did not see all was done, and that they did but roast corn, &c. So there being affirmations and negations concerning the number of men and the spoil, not having eye-witnesses of our own, that fell, as also many other mutual complaints of rifling each other, which were heard at large to give vent and breathing to both parts.

"At last we drew them to shake hands, Miantinomo and Uncas, and Miantinomo invited (twice earnestly) Uncas to sup and dine with him, he and all his company (his men having killed some venison;) but he would not yield, although the magistrates persuaded him also to it.

"In a private conference, Miantinomo, from Canonicus and himself, gave in the names of all the Pequod sachems and murderers of the English. The names of the sachems were acknowledged by Uncas, as also the places, which only I shall be bold to set down:

"Nausipouck, Puttaquappuonckquame his son, now on Long-Island.

"Nanasquiouwut, Puttaquappuonckquame his brother, at Mohegan.

"Puppompogs, Sassacus his brother, at Mohegan.

"Mausaumpous, at Niantick.

"Kithansh, at Mohegan.

"Attayakitch, at Pequod or Mohegan.

"These, with the murderers, the magistrates desired to cut off, the rest to be divided, and to abolish their names. An inquisition was made, and it was affirmed from Canonicus, that he had not one. Miantinomo gave in the names of ten or eleven, which were the remainder of near seventy, which at the first subjected themselves, of which I advertised your worship, but all again departed or never came to him; so that two or three of these he had with him; the rest were at Mohegan and Pequod.

"Uncas was desired to give in the names of his. He answered, that he knew not their names. He said, there were forty on Long-Island; and that Janemoh and three Niantick sachems had Pequods, and that he himself had but twenty. Thomas Stanton told him and the magistrates, that he dealt very falsely; and it was affirmed by others, that he fetched thirty or forty from Long-Island at one time. Then he acknowledged, that he had thirty, but the names he could not give. It pleased the magistrates to request me to send to Niantick, that the names of their Pequods might be sent to Connecticut; as also to give Uncas ten days to bring in the number and names of his Pequods and their runaways, Mr. Haynes threatening also (in case of failing) to fetch them.

"Sir, at Plymouth, it pleased the Lord to force the prisoners to confess, that they all complotted and intended murder; and they were, three of them, (the fourth having escaped, by a pinnace, from Aquetneck,) executed in the presence of the natives who went with me. Our friends confessed, that they received much quickening from your own hand. O that they might also in a case more weighty, wherein they need much, viz. the standing to their present government and liberties, to which I find them weakly resolved.

"They have requested me to inquire out a murder five years since committed upon a Plymouth man, (as they now hear) by two Narraganset Indians, between Plymouth and Sowams. I hope, (if true) the Lord will discover it.

"Sir, I understand there hath been some Englishman of late come over, who hath told much to Cutshamoquene's

Indians (I think Auhaudin) of a great sachem in England, (using the King's name) to whom all the sachems in this land are and shall be nothing, and where his ships ere long shall land; and this is much news at present amongst the natives. I hope to inquire out the man.

"Mr. Vane hath also written to Mr. Coddington and others on the island of late, to remove from Boston, as speedily as they might, because some evil was ripening, &c. The most holy and mighty One blast all mischievous buds and blossoms, and prepare us for tears in the valley of tears, help you and us to trample on the dunghill of this present world, and to set affections and cast anchor above these heavens and earth, which are reserved for burning.

"Sir, I hear, that two malicious persons, (one I was bold to trouble your worship with not long since) Joshua Verin, and another yet with us, William Arnold, have most falsely and slanderously (as I hope it shall appear) complotted together (even as Gardiner did against yourself) many odious accusations in writing. It may be, they may some way come to your loving hand. I presume the end is to render me odious both to the King's Majesty, as also to yourselves. I shall request humbly your wonted love and gentleness (if it comes to your worship's hand) to help me with the sight of it, and I am confident yourself shall be the judge of the notorious wickedness and malicious falsehoods contained therein, and that there hath not passed aught from me, either concerning the maintaining of our liberties in this land, or any difference with yourselves, which shall not manifest loyalty's reverence, modesty and tender affection.

"The Lord Jesus, the sun of righteously* shine brightly and eternally on you and yours, and all that seek him that was crucified. In him I desire ever to be,

"Your worship's most unfeigned,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"All respective salutations to kind Mrs. Winthrop, Mr. Deputy, Mr. Bellingham, and theirs."

In September, 1638, Mr. Williams' eldest son was born, to whom his father gave the name of Providence. He is

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* righteousness?

said to have been the first English male child, who was born there.

We may here appropriately mention, the establishment of Harvard College. The great and good men who presided over the councils of Massachusetts felt, that learning and religion are the firmest pillars of civil liberty. In their weakness, they resolved to establish a college. In October, 1636, during the Pequod war, the General Court appropriated for the purpose, four hundred pounds, equal to the whole sum raised by taxation, in one year, in the whole colony, for the support of the civil government. Rev. John Harvard, who died September 14, 1638, left to the college nearly eight hundred pounds, being half of his property. The General Court gave to the college his honored name, and called that part of Newtown where it had been erected, Cambridge.

During the year, 1638, the colony at New-Haven was commenced, by Theophilus Eaton, John Davenport, and others, who purchased the land of the Indians, and laid the foundation of the city of New-Haven. The colony bore the same name, until 1665, when it was united with that which had been commenced at Hartford, and assumed the common name of Connecticut.

In May, of this year, an arbitrary order was issued in England, to prevent emigration to America. Eight ships, which were on the point of sailing for New-England, were stopped. By this order, Oliver Cromwell, Sir Arthur Hazlerig, John Hampden, and others, were prevented from coming to America. The King had afterwards abundant reason to lament his interference to detain these men, who so largely contributed to subvert his throne.* It is a matter of curious speculation, what would have been the course and fortunes of Cromwell, if he had reached our shores. How different might have been the history of England, for the next fifty years.

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* "Nescia mens hominum fati sortisque futuræ.
Turno tempus erit, magno cum optaverit emptum
Intactum Pallanta." *Æneis*, x. 501–4.

CHAPTER XIII.

Baptism of Mr. Williams—establishment of the First Baptist Church in Providence—Mr. Williams soon leaves the church.

Having related the principal facts, which can now be ascertained, concerning the settlement of Providence and Newport, it is proper to say something of ecclesiastical affairs. We must lament, in vain, that so little is known on this subject. We have no account, from Mr. Williams or his friends, of the manner in which the public worship of God was maintained, and the first church formed at Providence. The notices which may be gleaned from writers, who, for various reasons, were not disposed to look on the new colony with a favorable eye, must, obviously, be received with caution.

We might be sure, from the known character of Mr. Williams, and of his companions, that they would meet together for the public worship of God. Mr. Williams was acknowledged, at Plymouth and Salem, to be an able minister, and he would, of course, preach to those who might choose to hear him, at Providence. We learn from Winthrop,* that he was accustomed to hold meetings, both on the Sabbaths, and on week days. It does not appear, that there was, at first, any organization into a distinct church; though, perhaps, those who had been members of the church in Salem, regarded themselves as still a church, and Mr. Williams as their pastor.† They were, at first, few in number, and were obliged to provide dwellings and subsistence for themselves and their families. They were not able to erect a house of worship, and tradition states, that in pleasant weather they met in a grove. On other occasions, they probably convened, either at the house of Mr.

* Vol. i. p. 283, already quoted.

† Governor Hopkins thinks, that there was a church formed on Congregational principles, before Mr. Williams' baptism.—History of Providence, in 2 Mass. His. Col. ix. p. 196. This is not probable, for nothing is said by the writers in Massachusetts, of such a church, and the members of the church in Salem, who removed to Providence, were not excluded from that church, till after their baptism. Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 371.

Williams, or at some other private habitation; and, undoubtedly, enjoyed, in their humble assemblies, the presence of Him, who is nigh to all who fear Him, and who prefers "above all temples, the upright heart and pure."*

It should be remembered, that the colony was a refuge for all who pleased to reside there; and that, as Winthrop states, "at their first coming, Mr. Williams and the rest did make an order, that no man should be molested for his conscience." The inhabitants were consequently free to worship God as they thought proper. They were not all united in opinion on religious subjects. Mr. Williams may have judged it to be most conducive to the peace and welfare of his little colony, to erect, at first, no distinct church, but to gather the inhabitants into one assembly for worship; until the number should have so increased, as to enable them to form separate churches, and maintain public worship conformably to their own views.

After the lapse of two or three years, the colony had increased, by the accession of emigrants from England, as well as from the other colonies. Some of these are said by Hubbard, (336) to have been inclined to the principles of the Baptists. By what means Mr. Williams' mind was drawn to a consideration of baptism, we do not know. He was accused, before his banishment, of preaching doctrines "tending to anabaptistry;† a charge which was meant to impute to him principles subversive of civil order, rather than heterodox notions concerning the rite of baptism. It does not appear, that he had then adopted any views on this point, opposed to the practice of the churches in Massachusetts; for if he had then insisted on immersion, and rejected the baptism of infants, these opinions would certainly have been placed prominently among the reasons for his banishment.

That his principles tended to "anabaptistry," using this word as referring to the principles now held by the Baptists, is doubtless true. His views of the distinction between the Mosaic institutions and the christian church; his reverence for the supreme authority of Jesus Christ; his appeals

*The first church in Boston, several of whose members were wealthy, existed two years before they began to build a meeting-house. Winthrop, vol. i. p. 87.

† Morton's Memorial, p. 151.

to the Scriptures as the only rule of faith and practice, and to the New Testament as the statute book of the Christian church; his assertion and defence of the independent right, and imperative obligation, of every individual to search the oracles of God, and follow their teachings, without dictation or restraint from other men; his bold and uniform proclamation of the unfettered liberty of conscience, in those concerns which pertain to the intercourse between God and the soul, will doubtless be acknowledged by the Baptists, to have had a strong tendency to lead Mr. Williams to adopt their distinctive views of the Christian ordinances.

Nor will it be considered, by other men, as a very strange vagary of an unstable mind, that a clergyman, educated in the Church of England, should adopt the opinion, that immersion is the only scriptural baptism, when that church had taught him, in her offices, that baptism must be so administered, except in cases of weakness or disease. Nor ought Mr. Williams to be severely censured for denying that infants are proper subjects of this ordinance, when it is recollected, that the first President of Harvard University, (Dunster,) held the same opinion; and the second President (Chauncy) so far followed in the same course, as to insist, that baptism should be administered, to infants and adults, by immersion only.* Mr. Williams will, at least, be viewed as excusable, by those who agree with a learned Pedobaptist of our own times, that "it is a plain case, there is no express precept respecting infant baptism in our sacred writings."† If Mr. Williams could not find infant baptism in the Scriptures, his rejection of it was a natural result of his principles, and may candidly be ascribed to his single-hearted deference to the authority of the Bible; though his reputation for ingenuity may suffer, because he was unable "to make out the proof in another way."

We are not, therefore, reduced to the necessity of adopting Governor Winthrop's account of Mr. Williams' change of opinion. That account attributes the blame to an artful woman, a sister of the great heresiarch of those

* Peirce's History of Harvard University, pp. 10, 18.

† Dr. Woods, on Infant Baptism, Lecture I.—He adds, "the proof then, that infant baptism is a divine institution, must be made out in another way."

times, Mrs. Hutchinson.* We may, not unreasonably, suppose, that Mr. Williams, on further study of the Scriptures, and finding that several of the colonists had embraced Baptist principles, was himself convinced, that he had not been baptized. He accordingly resolved to obey the Saviour's command, and unite in a church, with such persons as might be willing to join him.

A difficulty now presented itself. They had been educated in the Episcopal church, and were accustomed to regard the clergy with respect, as the only legal administrators of the Christian ordinances. Mr. Williams himself seems to have strongly felt this difficulty; and his scruples on this point, probably, had some effect on his subsequent conduct. He had not himself been immersed, and it seemed a reasonable conclusion, that he could not, with propriety, baptize his brethren, till he had received baptism. There was no other minister in New-England, who would have baptized him, if he had made an application, and his banishment from Massachusetts had been suspended.

The most obvious expedient, in their circumstances, was adopted. Mr. Ezekiel Holliman† was selected to baptize Mr. Williams, who then baptized the administrator and ten others.‡ This event occurred in March, 1638–9. Thus was founded the first Baptist church in America, and the

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* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 293. Under date of March, 1638–9, he says: "At Providence, things grew still worse; for a sister of Mrs. Hutchinson, the wife of one Scott, being infected with anabaptistry, and going last year to live at Providence, Mr. Williams was taken (or rather emboldened) by her to make open profession thereof, and accordingly was re-baptized by one Holliman, a poor man, late of Salem. Then Mr. Williams re-baptized him and some ten more. They also denied the baptizing of infants, and would have no magistrates."

† Governor Winthrop (vol. i. p. 293) calls Mr. Holliman "a poor man," which Hubbard, (338) in copying, alters to a "mean fellow." But Mr. Benedict says, that he was a man of "gifts and piety," and that he was chosen an assistant to Mr. Williams. Backus says, "after the year 1650, I find him more than once a Deputy from the town of Warwick in the General Court."—Vol. i. p. 106.

‡ The first twelve members are named by Benedict, (vol. i. p. 473.) Roger Williams, Ezekiel Holliman, William Arnold, William Harris, Stukely Westcott, John Green, Richard Waterman, Thomas James, Robert Cole, William Carpenter, Francis Weston, and Thomas Olney.

second, as it is stated, in the British empire.* The church was soon after increased by the addition of twelve other persons.

The validity of this baptism of Mr. Williams and his companions having been disputed, it may be proper to examine this point.

The spirit of the Scriptures, if not their letter, assigns to the ministers of the Gospel the duty of administering the ordinances of the church. Expediency obviously requires an adherence to this general principle. But the language of the Bible is not so decisive on this point, as to make it certain, that a layman might not, in cases where a minister could not be obtained, administer the ordinances. It is known, that in the earliest ages of the church, while there was a general observance of the principle, that the administration of the ordinances belongs to ministers, laymen were occasionally permitted to baptize. Mosheim says: "At first, all who were engaged in propagating Christianity, administered this rite; nor can it be called in question, that whoever persuaded any person to embrace Christianity, could baptize his own disciple."† Tertullian says, "Lay-

* Backus, vol. i. 106, note. "There had been many of them [Baptists] intermixed with other societies from their first coming out of Popery; but their first distinct church in our nation was formed out of the Independent Church in London, whereof Mr. Henry Jacob was pastor, from 1616 to 1624, when he went to Virginia, and Mr. John Lathrop was chosen in his room. But nine years after, several persons in the society, finding that the congregation kept not to their first principles of separation, and being also convinced, that baptism was not to be administered to infants, but such only as professed faith in Christ, desired and obtained liberty, and formed themselves into a distinct church, Sept. 12, 1633, having Mr. John Spisbury for their minister."—Crosby, vol. i. pp. 148, 149. In the year 1639, another Baptist church was formed in London, but probably not so early as the church at Providence.

† Mosheim, b. 1, c. 1, p. 2, ch. 4, s. 8. See Campbell's Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, lecture iv. for proof, that laymen, in the early times of the Christian era, often baptized. He quotes Hilary, who, in his Exposition of the Epistle to the Ephesians, 4: 11, 12, says, "Postquam omnibus locis ecclesiæ sunt constitutæ, et officia ordinata, aliter composita res est, quam cœperat; primum enim omnes docebant, et omnes baptizabant, quibuscunque diebus vel temporibus fuisset occasio." That is, when churches were every where constituted, and official duties prescribed, things were otherwise regulated, than at first, when all taught, and all baptized, whenever occasion required.

men have power to baptize, which yet, for the sake of order, they ought only to use in cases of necessity."* Ambrose says: "That at the beginning, laymen were permitted to preach and baptize, in order to increase the number of Christians."† Augustine affirms, "that it is a very small fault, or none at all, for laymen to baptize, in cases of urgent necessity."‡ Jerome speaks of it as a thing certain, that "laymen may lawfully baptize, when there is urgent necessity for it."§ There were, it is true, at a very early period, erroneous views of the indispensable necessity of baptism to salvation, which led to various unauthorized practices. But the principle, that laymen might lawfully baptize, in certain exigencies, seems to have been early admitted, and it was formally sanctioned by a decree of the Council of Eliberis.||

But the reason of the case is of more weight than the decisions of councils. It sometimes happens, that persons become Christians, without the direct labors of a minister. If, for example, by the agency of the Scriptures and tracts, which missionaries are now sending into the Chinese empire, a number of persons in a neighborhood should become converts, would it not be their privilege and their duty, if they were sufficiently instructed respecting the nature of the church and of its ordinances, to appoint one of their number to baptize the rest, to form themselves into a church, and to partake of the Lord's Supper? Must these believers wait, till a missionary could come to baptize them, and to organize a church? The great ends for which the church and its ordinances were appointed,—the spiritual edification of believers, and the spread of truth,—would require that these Christians should enjoy them. If it were indispensa-

* Lib. de baptismo, cap. xvii. Laicis etiam jus est (baptizandi.) Sufficiat in necessitatibus utaris, sicubi aut loci, aut temporis, aut personæ conditio compellit.

† S. Ambrosius in Eph. iv.

‡ S. Augustinus contra Padmenian, lib. ii. cap. xiii.

§ Hieronymus, adv. Luciferianas, cap. v.—See Potter on Church Government, p. 231, &c. Phil. ed. for other authorities.

|| Concil. Elib. Can. xxxviii.—Peregre navigantes, aut si Ecclesia in proximo non fuerit, posse fidelem, qui lavacrum suum integrum habet, nec sit bigamus, baptizare in necessitate, ita ut, si supervixerit, ad Episcopum suum perducat, ut per manus impositionem perfici possit.—Quoted by Potter, p. 232.

ble, that the administrator be a minister, there would, in such a case, be no insuperable difficulty. The duty of the converts to assemble, to pray, and to exhort each other, would be clear. Their voluntary agreement thus to meet, to maintain mutual watchfulness, and to enjoy the ordinances of the Gospel, would constitute them a church. They might call one of their number, possessing, in their judgment, suitable gifts, to the office of the ministry, and this election by the church would be the only human sanction which such a minister would need, to authorize him to preach the Gospel, and to administer the ordinances.* This position cannot be denied, without resorting to the doctrine of a regular apostolical succession. If the church has no power to originate a ministry, by investing with the sacred office those to whom, in her judgment, the Saviour has given the inward vocation, the ministry might become extinct. Those who insist on an apostolical succession, are obliged to trace their ministry through the channel of the papal clergy. They are forced to admit, that the Pope is a true bishop, and the Catholic community a Christian church. Archbishop Laud confessed, that "it is through her that the bishops of the Church of England, who have the honor to be capable of deriving their calling from St. Peter, must deduce their succession."† If the race of English prelates had become extinct, as might have happened, had Cromwell's life been prolonged a few years, the Church of England would have been reduced to the embarrassing dilemma, of consecrating bishops by her own authority, and thus dissolving the charm of succession, or of sending an humble embassy to Rome, to crave from his Holiness the communication, anew, of the mysterious virtue.

If, then, a company of believers in China might, in accordance with the spirit of the New Testament, appoint an administrator of the ordinances, the little band of Baptists at Providence were fully authorized to do it.‡ No minister

* Mr. Holliman, who baptized Mr. Williams, became a preacher.

† Neal, vol. iii. p. 233.

‡ The excellent John Robinson, the father of the Plymouth colony, had a controversy with the Rev. Mr. Bernard, an Episcopal minister. Mr. Robinson wrote a book, entitled "A Justification of Separation from the Church of England."—In this book, he uses the same argument as that in the text: "Zanchy, upon the fifth to the Ephe-

could have been obtained, in America, to baptize Mr. Williams. The case was one of obvious necessity, and the validity of the baptism cannot be denied, without rejecting the fundamental principle, on which dissenting churches rest, that all the ecclesiastical power on earth resides ultimately in the church, and that she is authorized to adopt any measures, not repugnant to the Scriptures, which may be necessary for her preservation and prosperity. Whatever the New Testament has positively prescribed, must of course be strictly obeyed.

In regard to those whom Mr. Williams baptized, there can be no dispute. He was a clergyman of the Church of England, and Pedobaptists must admit, that immersion, administered by him, was Christian baptism. Their own ministers not unfrequently administer the rite in this manner, and the persons thus baptized are received as regular members of their churches.*

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sians, treating of baptism, propounds a question of a Turk, coming to the knowledge of Christ and to faith by reading the New Testament, and withal teaching his family and converting it and others to Christ, and being in a country whence he cannot easily come to Christian countries, whether he may baptize them, whom he hath converted to Christ, he himself being unbaptized? He answers, I doubt not of it, but that he may, and withal provide that he himself be baptized of one of the three converted by him. The reason he gives is, because he is a minister of the word, extraordinarily stirred up by Christ; and so as such a minister may, with the consent of that small church, appoint one of the communicants, and provide that he be baptized by him." Backus, vol. i. p. 106.

* The question, which has been asked, with some emphasis, as if it vitally affected the Baptist churches in this country: "*By whom was Roger Williams baptized?*" has no practical importance. All whom he immersed were, as Pedobaptists must admit, baptized. The great family of Baptists in this country did not spring from the First Church in Providence. Many Baptist ministers and members came, at an early period, from Europe, and thus churches were formed in different parts of the country, which have since multiplied over the land. The first Baptist church formed in the present State of Massachusetts, is the church at Swansea. Its origin is dated in 1663, when the Rev. John Miles came from Wales, with a number of the members of a Baptist church, who brought with them its records. It was, in fact, an emigration of a church. Of the 400,000 Baptist communicants now in the United States, a small fraction only have had any connection, either immediate or remote, with the venerable church at Providence, though her members are numerous, and she has been honored as the mother of many ministers. The question, discussed in the preceding pages, disturbed, for a while, the first English

At what time, and under what circumstances, Mr. Williams left the church, has been a vexed question among writers. Callender, (p. 56,) expresses a doubt, whether Mr. Williams ever belonged to the church, and adds: "The most ancient inhabitants now alive, some of them above eighty years old, and who personally knew Mr. Williams, and were well acquainted with many of the original settlers, never heard that Mr. Williams formed the Baptist church there, but always understood, that Mr. Brown, Mr. Wickenden, Mr. Dexter, Mr. Olney, Mr. Tillinghast, &c. were the first founders of that church." But Mr. Callender was under a mistake, and, according to Mr. Backus,* he was afterwards convinced of his error. The records of the church, as quoted by Mr. Benedict (vol. i. p. 476,) assert, that "Mr. Williams held his pastoral office about four years, and then resigned the same to Mr. Brown and Mr. Wickenden, and went to England, to solicit the first charter." This statement, also, is incorrect.

Winthrop (vol. i. p. 307,) says, under the date of June or July, 1639: "At Providence, matters went on after the old manner. Mr. Williams and many of his company a few months since were in all haste re-baptized, and denied communion with all others; and now he was come to question his second baptism, not being able to derive the authority of it from the apostles, otherwise than by the ministers of England, (whom he judged to be ill authority) so as he conceived God would raise up some apostolic power. Therefore he bent himself that way, expecting (as was supposed) to become an apostle; and having a little before refused communion with all, save his own wife, now he would

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Baptists. They had no clerical administrator, who had himself, in their view, been baptized. Some of them went to Holland, and were baptized by Baptist ministers there. "But," says Crosby, (vol. i. p. 103,) "the greatest number of the English Baptists, and the more judicious, looked upon all this as needless trouble, and what proceeded from the old Popish doctrine of right to administer sacraments by an uninterrupted succession, which neither the Church of Rome, nor the Church of England, much less the modern dissenters, could prove to be with them. They affirmed, therefore, and practised accordingly, that after a general corruption of baptism, an unbaptized person might warrantably baptize, and so begin a reformation." These examples, however, cannot justify a departure from the usual practice of our churches at the present day, when the ministry is regularly established.

preach to and pray with all comers. Whereupon some of his followers left him and returned back from whence they went."

According to this paragraph, Mr. Williams left the church about three or four months after its formation. This fact is confirmed by a letter of Richard Scott, inserted in George Fox's "Firebrand Quenched." Scott says of Roger Williams, "I walked with him in the Baptist way, about three or four months, in which time he broke from the society, and declared at large the grounds and reason of it, that their baptism could not be right, because it was not administered by an apostle. After that, he set up a way of seeking with two or three that had dissented with him, by way of preaching and praying; and there he continued a year or two, till two of the three left him."*

Mr. Scott was at Providence, when the church was formed, and there can be no doubt, that he soon became a member of it, though he afterwards joined the Quakers. The "three or four months" which he mentions must, on this supposition, be estimated as commencing at, or near, the formation of the church, and consequently Mr. Williams must have left it in June or July, 1639, as Winthrop states.

Of his reasons for this step, we are not clearly informed. The motives assigned by those who disapproved his conduct, are loosely stated, and must be received with caution. The principal reason, as stated by Winthrop, Scott, and others, was, that Mr. Williams doubted the validity of the baptism which he and his associates had received, because it was not "administered by an apostle," or because he could not "derive the authority of it from the apostles, otherwise than by the ministers of England, whom he judged to be ill authority."

Of Mr. Williams' real views at this time, we have no explanation by himself; but if we may judge from his writings a few years later, he denied, that any ministry now exists, which is authorized to preach the Gospel to the impenitent, or to administer the ordinances. He believed, that these functions belonged to the apostolic race of ministers, which was interrupted and discontinued, when the reign of Antichrist commenced, and which will not, as he thought, be restored, till the witnesses shall have been slain,

and raised again. (Rev. 11: 11.) In his "Bloody Tenet," printed in 1644, several passages occur, in which he intimates, that the true church and ministry are now lost. The following paragraph may be quoted, both as an illustration of his views and as a proof of his liberal charity: He speaks of "thousands and ten thousands, yea, the whole generation of the righteous, who, since the falling away (from the first primitive Christian state or worship) have and do err fundamentally concerning the true matter, constitution, gathering and governing of the Church; and yet far be it from any pious breast to imagine, that they are not saved, and that their souls are not bound up in the bundle of eternal life."—(p. 20.) He says, in his "Hireling Ministry none of Christ's," published in 1652: "In the poor small span of my life, I desired to have been a diligent and constant observer, and have been myself many ways engaged, in city, in country, in court, in schools, in universities, in churches, in Old and New England, and yet cannot, in the holy presence of God, bring in the result of a satisfying discovery, that either the begetting ministry of the apostles or messengers to the nations, or the feeding and nourishing ministry of pastors and teachers, according to the first institution of the Lord Jesus, are yet restored and extant." (p. 4.)

The only ministry, which, in his opinion, now exists, is that of prophets, i. e. ministers, who explain religious truths, and bear witness against error. In a passage of the same work, he says: "Ever since the beast Antichrist rose, the Lord hath stirred up the ministry of prophecy, who must continue their witness and prophecy, until their witness be finished, and slaughters, probably near approaching, accomplished."

We shall have occasion to disclose his opinions more fully in a subsequent chapter. The passages which we have quoted were not printed till a few years after he left the church, but there can be no doubt, that they explain his conduct on that occasion. His mind, like the minds of many other good men, became blinded "by excess of light," while gazing at the glorious visions of the Apocalypse; and he formed the conclusion, that in the disastrous antichristian apostacy, the true ministry and the whole exterior organization of the church went to ruin, from which,

however, as he believed, they shall be restored, and the Saviour's kingdom shall come on earth.

We need not pause, now, to show, that his views were erroneous. We must deeply regret, that he formed them; but we can have no doubt of his sincerity. A temperament like his impelled him to hasty decisions, but his love of truth held a supreme sway over his mind. No considerations could deter him from adopting, and carrying into instant practice, whatever he believed to be true. Nothing but clear conviction could induce him to relinquish what he considered as right. His principle of action on this subject is beautifully expressed in a passage of his Bloody Tenet: "Having bought truth dear, we must not sell it cheap, not the least grain of it, for the whole world; no not for the saving of souls, though our own most precious, least of all for the bitter sweetening of a little vanishing pleasure."

We may conclude, then, that he left the church, not because he had any doubts respecting the nature of baptism; nor because he had been baptized by a layman; but because he believed, that no man is now authorized to administer the ordinances, and that no true church can exist, till the apostolic ministry shall be restored. With these views, he could not conscientiously remain connected with any church, nor regard his baptism as valid.

Winthrop states, that he expected, "as was *supposed*, to become an apostle." This supposition is not entitled to much weight. It is certain, however, that he believed the restoration of the church and its ministry to be not far distant, and he might reasonably hope, should he live to witness this glorious event, to be honored with a vocation to this high ministry.

The statement of Winthrop, that "having a little before refused communion with all, *save his own wife*, now he would preach to and pray with all comers," deserves a passing remark. The phrase, "a little before," apparently refers to the time of Mr. Williams' residence at Salem. But Morton, (p. 153) and Hubbard, who copies him, (p. 207) assert, that "he withdrew all private religious communion from any that would hold communion with the church there; insomuch as he would not pray nor give thanks at meals *with his own wife*, nor any of his family, because they went to the church assemblies." Here Winthrop's statement

respecting Mr. Williams' wife is directly opposed to that of Morton and Hubbard. It is probable, that they were all under a mistake.

The disputed point, whether Mr. Williams was the first pastor of the church, or not, does not appear to present a material difficulty. He would, we may suppose, as a matter of course, be the pastor of the church while he remained in connection with it. He was the only ordained minister at Providence, and though there may have been no formal election, we cannot reasonably doubt, that he was considered as the pastor. Richard Scott accuses him, in his letter, of a disposition to manage every thing according to his own pleasure; a charge, which, coming from an adversary, may imply no more than that Mr. Williams was the head of the church. When he left it, he ceased, of course, to be its pastor. He was succeeded by the Rev. Chad Brown, though not, as it appears, till after an interval of two years; for the records of the church assert, that he was not ordained till the year 1642.* We may easily suppose, that as Mr. Williams' connection with the church was very short, Mr. Brown was considered as the first pastor, even by his contemporaries, and that this impression was transmitted to their descendants. It was not unnatural, moreover, for the church to be willing to recognise Mr. Brown as the first pastor, rather than a man who soon left them, and who refused to acknowledge them, or any other body of men, to be a true church. It is possible, that other causes had some influence in the case. It is certain, however, that Mr. Brown has been generally believed to have been the first pastor of the church.† He was, unquestionably, the first regular and

* Benedict, vol. i. p. 477.

† John Howland, Esq., in a letter to the author, says: "The college was built in 1770. On the question among the founders of it, on what lot to place the building, they decided on the present site of the old college, because it was the home lot of Chad Brown, the first minister of the Baptist church. Other land could have been obtained, but the reason given prevailed in fixing the site. Had the impression been prevalent, that Roger Williams was the first minister or principal founder of the society, his home lot could have been purchased, which was a situation fully as eligible for the purpose. If any doubts rested in the minds of the gentlemen at that time, as to the validity of the claim of Chad Brown to this preference, perhaps the circumstance of Mr. Williams' deserting the order, and protesting against it, might have produced the determination in favor of Brown."

permanent pastor, and may be regarded as one of the chief founders. It is not probable that he contended for the honor while he lived, and we may be sure that there was no strife, on this point, between him and Roger Williams, who speaks of him, in a letter written in 1677, as "a wise and godly soul, now with God."

We have thus stated the facts, concerning Mr. Williams' conduct, so far as we have been able to ascertain them. We see that he acted from erroneous views, in leaving the church, and we lament that he was thus misled into a course injurious to religion and to his own spiritual welfare. But we see nothing which impeaches his religious character; and his future life furnished abundant evidence of his piety towards God, and of his love to men. He adopted no errors, except his views respecting the ministry and the organization of the church. The great truths of the Gospel he steadfastly believed. His life exhibited their efficacy, and his heart felt their consoling power.

The church continued in existence, after Mr. Williams left it. The statement of Richard Scott, that "*he broke from the society*," implies, that the society itself or church remained. The Rev. Chad Brown became its pastor, and a succession of good men have continued to labor for the Lord, in that church, till the present day. The church has experienced some of the usual vicissitudes to which all things on earth are liable; but it has never ceased to exist, and for the most part it has enjoyed great prosperity.

No meeting-house was built till about 1700, when the Rev. Pardon Tillinghast, the pastor, erected a house at his own expense.* This long delay to build a meeting-house may be, in part, explained, by the poverty of the inhabitants, and by the diversity of religious opinions which prevailed among them. But we can scarcely acquit the church of some deficiency in zeal and liberality. We

* This house was built on the west side of North Main street, near its junction with Smith street, and a short distance north of Roger Williams' spring. It was probably a small and rather rude building. Tradition states, that it was "in the shape of a hay cap, with a fireplace in the middle, the smoke escaping from a hole in the roof." It was taken down, and a larger building erected in 1718. In 1774–5, the spacious and elegant house now occupied by the First Baptist Church, was erected.

must presume, however, that they had a stated place of worship. Their numbers were, at this period, small, and they had, perhaps, sufficient humility to be content with very primitive accommodations. To Him whom they worshipped, the sincere offerings of pious hearts were acceptable, however humble the place from which they ascended.

Of the religious doctrines of this church, Mr. Benedict (vol. i. p. 486) says: "It was first formed on the Particular or Calvinistic plan. In process of time, they became what our English brethren would call General Baptists, and so continued for the most part more than a hundred years. From the commencement of Dr. Manning's ministry, they have been verging back to their first principles, and now very little of the Arminian leaven is found among them."

These facts show, that Mr. Cotton and his grandson, Cotton Mather, were mistaken, when they affirmed of the church at Providence, that they "broke forth into anabaptism, and then into antibaptism and familism, and now finally into no church at all." * Perhaps Mr. Cotton would not acknowledge, that the congregation of Baptists at Providence deserved the name of a church. Mr. Williams and his wife, with several others of the members, were excommunicated from the church at Salem, of which they were retained as members till they were baptized.† A Baptist

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* Magnalia, b. vii. sec. 7. Gov. Hopkins, (a member of the Society of Friends) says, in his history of Providence, written in 1765, "This church hath, *from its beginning*, kept itself in repute, and maintained its discipline, so as to avoid scandal or schism, to this day. It hath always been, and still is, a numerous congregation, and in which I have with pleasure observed, very lately, sundry descendants from each of the founders of the colony, except Holliman." 2 His. Col. ix. 197.

† The letter, announcing their exclusion, to the church at Dorchester, may properly be quoted here, as an illustration of the customs of those times:

"*Salem*, 1*st* 5*th mo.* 39.

"Reverend and dearly beloved in the Lord,

"We thought it our bounden duty to acquaint you with the names of such persons as have had the great censure passed upon them in this our church, with the reasons thereof, beseeching you in the Lord, not only to read their names in public to yours, but also to

church, thus constituted, could not be viewed with much favor by Mr. Cotton and his friends. A church, which was formed this year at Newport, though Congregational in form, and orthodox, it is presumed, in its doctrines, is mentioned, in a tone of censure, by Winthrop, and after him, by Hubbard, (339) as having been gathered in a "very disordered way, for they took some excommunicated persons, and others who were members of the church of Boston, and not dismissed."* The leaders, both in church and state, in Massachusetts, were not then in a mood to be pleased with any thing which occurred in Rhode-Island. It would have been well if this feeling had expired with the first age. But local prejudice is almost as durable as the natural features of a country. Bœotia incurred, among the Greeks, a contempt, which the fame

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give us the like notice of any dealt with in like manner by you, that so we may walk towards them accordingly; for some of us, here, have had communion ignorantly with some of other churches. 2 Thess. iii. 14. We can do no less than have such noted as disobey the truth.

"ROGER WILLIAMS and his wife, JOHN THROGMORTON and his wife, THOMAS OLNEY and his wife, STUKELY WESTCOTT and his wife, MARY HOLLIMAN, Widow REEVES.

"These wholly refused to hear the church, denying it, and all the churches in the Bay, to be true churches, and (except two) are all re-baptized.

"JOHN ELFORD, for obstinacy, after divers sins he stood guilty of, and proved by witness. WILLIAM JAMES, for pride, and divers other evils, in which he remained obstinate. JOHN TABBY, for much pride, and unnaturalness to his wife, who was lately executed for murdering her child. WILLIAM WALCOT, for refusing to bring his children to the ordinance, neglecting willingly family duties, &c.

"Thus, wishing the continued enjoyment of both the staves, beauty and bands, and that your souls may flourish as watered gardens, rest,

"Yours in the Lord Jesus,

"HUGH PETERS,

"By the Church's order, and in their name.

"For the Church of Christ in Dorchester."

* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 297. Mr. Savage remarks, in a note: "Those members of Boston church, who had been driven by intolerance to the new region, if they gathered a church at all, must do it in a disordered way, for they might well apprehend, that an application for dismission would be rejected, and perhaps punished by excommunication."

of Pindar, Hesiod and Epaminondas could not soften.* Nazareth seems to have acquired a similar distinction among the Jews.† Rhode-Island may regret, yet cannot greatly wonder, that her sisters have sometimes remembered the circumstances of her origin, better than the purity of her principles and the steadiness of her patriotism. Many, since Mr. Cotton, have been inclined to doubt, whether there was any true religion in Rhode-Island, and to believe, with Winthrop, that there was no good government. But let her not be moved. Time is brightening the fame of her founder, and the reflected lustre will attract the eyes of men to a fairer contemplation of her character.

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* Horace (Ep. lib. ii. Ep. i. 244) has a pungent sarcasm, ending thus:

"Bœotum in crasso jurares aera natum."

† John, i. 46.

CHAPTER XIV.

Affairs of the Indians—birth of Mr. Williams' fourth child—disputes at Providence about boundaries—Committee of Arbitration—account of Samuel Gorton.

Little is known of transactions, during two or three subsequent years, which can shed light on the conduct or character of Mr. Williams. Winthrop* mentions one circumstance, that shows the confidence which the Indians reposed in the founder of Rhode-Island, and the invincible opposition to him that was maintained in Massachusetts. Rumors were circulated, that the Indians were again forming plots against the colonists; that Miantinomo, the Narraganset sachem, had sent a large present of wampum to the Mohawks, inviting them to an alliance against the English, and that the Mohawks had complied with the invitation. The government of Massachusetts took the precaution to strengthen the military defences of the towns, and to send an officer, with three men and an interpreter, to Miantinomo, to ascertain his real dispositions. He denied all hostile intentions against the colonists, and, says Winthrop, "promised to come to Boston (as he was desired) if Mr. Williams might come with him, (but that we had denied.")

It is pleasing to observe the readiness of this savage chief to visit those who evidently distrusted him, provided that Mr. Williams might accompany him, in whose knowledge of his language, and firm friendship, he felt a confidence proportioned to the suspicions which savages feel towards all whom they have not thoroughly tried. And it is remarkable, that the rulers of Massachusetts would not relax the sentence of banishment, even for the advantage of a personal interview with the powerful sachem.

Mr. Williams was doubtless employed at Providence, in labors for the welfare of the colony, and for the subsistence of his family. He possessed no property, and was

* Vol. ii. p. 8.

obliged to support his wife and children by his personal labor. We have already seen, that, at his first coming, he planted his field, *Whatcheer*, with his own hands. He engaged, also, in traffic with the natives, and must have spent much time in travelling among them. The knowledge of their language, which he displayed in his Key, published a few years afterwards, could have been acquired only by a familiar and frequent intercourse with them, in their own habitations. He assures us, in his preface, that, "of later times, (out of desire to attain their language,) I have run through varieties of intercourses with them, day and night, summer and winter, by land and sea. Many solemn discourses I have had with all sorts of nations of them, from one end of the country to another.*

His fourth child, Marcy, was born on the 15th of July, 1640.

The tranquillity of the town of Providence was early disturbed, by disputes respecting the boundaries of lands. The town was divided into two settlements, the original one at Moshassuck, and that on the Pawtuxet river. These two communities were much agitated, at various times, by dissensions concerning their respective limits. The loose phraseology of the memorandum attached to the deed of the sachems, "up the streams of Pawtucket and Pawtuxet, without limits, we might have for our use of cattle," was construed, by some, as a cession of the land up to the sources of the streams; while Roger Williams, more reasonably, insisted, that the Indians merely meant to allow the cattle to feed occasionally on the banks of the rivers. Of this dispute we shall see more hereafter. It seems to have commenced very early, and to have seriously disturbed the peace of the town. It became evident that a more energetic government was necessary. A committee was appointed by the town, consisting of Robert Coles, Chad Brown, William Harris, and John Warner, who were authorized to decide, by arbitration, the existing disputes. Their report is dated "Providence, the 27th of the 5th month, in the year (so called) 1640."† It settles the boundaries between the Pawtuxet purchasers and the other

* Williams' Key, p. 22, Providence ed. † See Appendix D.

inhabitants of Providence. It proposes that five men be chosen, to meet once a month, to dispose of lands, with a right of appeal to the town. It further recommends, that disputes be settled, in future, by arbitration, according to certain rules which it prescribes. It provides for the choice of a town clerk, and for a general town meeting for business, to be called by the clerk, every three months.

This report is highly characteristic of the times, and of the community. One of its prominent articles is in these words: "We agree, as formerly hath been the liberties of the town, so still, to hold forth liberty of conscience." This fundamental principle was recognised, and announced, on all occasions.

The democratic spirit appears in the provision, that the "five disposers" should present their accounts every quarter, and a new choice be made.

No form of government could be more simple than this. Mr. Callender says, (p. 43) in allusion to this period, that the inhabitants of Providence "did, to the number of near forty persons, combine in a form of civil government, according to a model drawn up by some of themselves, as most suitable to promote peace and order in their present circumstances, which, however, left them in a very feeble condition."

The government on Rhode-Island was more regularly organized the same year, as we have already stated. An act, which was passed on the 16th of March, 1641, says: "It was ordered, and unanimously agreed upon, that the government which this body politic doth attend unto in this island and the jurisdiction thereof, in favor of our Prince, is a Democracy, or popular government, that is to say, it is in the power of the freemen, orderly assembled, or major part of them, to make or constitute just laws, by which they will be regulated, and to depute from among themselves such ministers as shall see them faithfully executed between man and man."

The genuine Rhode-Island doctrine is recognised in the following act: "It was further ordered, by the authority of this present Court, that none be accounted a delinquent for doctrine, provided it be not directly repugnant to the government or laws established." And on the 17th of

September following, 1641, they passed this act: "It is ordered, that that law of the last Court, made concerning liberty of conscience in point of doctrine, be perpetuated."*

It thus appears, that the settlements at Providence, and on Rhode-Island, though, at that time, having no political connection, were founded on the same principles. Mr. Williams continued his friendly offices with the Indians, on behalf of the colony on Rhode-Island. On the 19th of September, 1642, he was requested "to consult and agree with Miantinomo, for the destruction of the wolves that are now upon the island."

The history of Samuel Gorton is a prominent event among the occurrences of this period. We cannot enter into a minute detail of his conduct, his opinions, and his sufferings; but a brief account of him is required, by his connection with Mr. Williams.

Mr. Gorton was born in London, and came to Boston in 1636. Here, his religious opinions and conduct occasioned, as we are told, much disturbance, and he removed to Plymouth, in 1637. He there engaged in a controversy with Mr. Smith, the pastor, who appealed to the civil power. Gorton was summoned before a court in Plymouth, at which he maintained his opinions with firmness, and, as the court thought, with insolence. He was amerced in a large fine, and banished, after having suffered, according to some writers,† corporal punishment. He removed to Newport, on Rhode-Island, in June, 1638. There he remained for a year or two; but he gave offence to the government, and, as some authors assert,‡ he was imprisoned, whipped, and banished from the island, probably in the

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* See R. I. State Papers, 2 Mass. His. Col. viii. p. 78.

† Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 113. Allen's Bio. Dic. article Gorton.

‡ Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 113. Winthrop, vol. ii. p. 59. Lechford, an author quoted by Mr. Savage, in a note, says: "There (Newport) lately they whipped Mr. Gorton, a grave man, for denying their power, and abusing some of their magistrates with uncivil terms, the Governor, Master Coddington, saying in Court, You that are for the King, lay hold on Gorton, and he, again, on the other side, called forth, All you that are for the King, lay hold on Coddington; whereupon Gorton was banished the island; so, with his wife, he went to Providence. They began about a small trespass of swine,

course of the year 1641. These transactions are not vouched by very satisfactory evidence ; and we know not, admitting that they occurred, to whom the blame belongs, or in what proportion it must be shared by Mr. Gorton and his judges.

From Newport, he proceeded to Providence, where, says Hutchinson, " Roger Williams, with his usual humanity, although he disliked his principles and behavior, gave him shelter." Mr. Williams, many years afterwards, publicly averred,* that he did not approve of Mr. Gorton's principles; but this disapprobation did not induce him to refuse the rights of hospitality to the fugitive. He had himself tasted of the same cup, and, like Dido, had been taught by suffering to succor the miserable.

Mr. Gorton, in January, 1641–2, purchased land at Pawtuxet, in the south part of the territory then included under the name of Providence, and within the limits of the present town of Cranston. He was soon joined by a number of persons, who were disfranchised at Newport, on account, perhaps, of their attachment to him.

A disturbance soon arose between Mr. Gorton's friends and the former inhabitants. The parties became so much exasperated, that they proceeded to acts of violence and bloodshed. Winthrop states, that " they came armed into the field, each against the other, but Mr. Williams pacified them for the present." Mr. Williams could not but deplore such a feud, in his infant colony, and, with the pacific disposition which ever characterized him, he endeavored to allay the tumult, and produce a reconciliation ; but his efforts were unsuccessful. The passions of the parties were too strongly excited, to admit of any arbitration but force. The government at Providence was then, as we have seen, a simple compact; and the citizens being divided in opinion and feeling, there was no superior power

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but it is thought some other matter was ingredient." Lechford's tract, called Plain Dealing, or News from New-England, is published in the Mass. His. Col. 3d series, 3d vol. Lechford's preface is dated January 17, 1641, after his return from America. He says that there were two hundred families on Rhode-Island. This must be a mistake.

* Reply to Mr. Cotton, p. 113.

to control the disturbers of the public peace. In this exigency, in November, 1641, some of the weaker party had recourse to the strange, and, as it proved, most disastrous expedient, of applying to the government of Massachusetts for aid or counsel.* The country was beyond the limits of Massachusetts, which could not interfere. "We answered them," says Winthrop,† "that we could not levy any war, without a General Court. For counsel, we told them, that except they did submit themselves to some jurisdiction, either Plymouth or ours, we had no calling or warrant to interpose in their contentions, but if they were once subject to any, then they had a calling to protect them."‡

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* In 3 Mass. His. Col. vol. i. p. 2, is their letter, signed by William Field, William Harris, William Carpenter, William Wickenden, William Reinolds, Thomas Harris, Thomas Hopkins, Hugh Bewitt, Joshua Winsor, Benedict Arnold, William Man, William W. Hunkinges, and Robert R. West. The letter was written by Benedict Arnold. Roger Williams, also, wrote a letter to the government of Massachusetts, in which he said, "Mr. Gorton, having foully abused high and low, at Aquetneck, is now bewitching and bemadding poor Providence." General Court's Vindication, May 30, 1665. It has been said, that Mr. Williams requested the government of Massachusetts to interfere; but we have seen no evidence of this, and it is in itself highly improbable. The utmost which we can suppose him to ask, in such a case, would be temporary aid in suppressing a tumult. We may be sure that he would oppose the usurpation of jurisdiction by Massachusetts. His letters show that he disapproved it.

† Vol. ii. p. 59.

‡ Winthrop introduces this account, by the remark, that "those of Providence, being all anabaptists, were divided in judgment; some were only against baptizing of infants, others denied all magistracy and churches, &c. of which Gorton, who had lately been whipped at Aquetneck, [Newport] was their instructer and captain." This observation is worthy of notice, as it shows how loosely this fearful word anabaptist was applied, and as it discriminates between those who merely rejected the baptism of infants, and those who denied all magistracy and churches. It is certain, that all the inhabitants were not Baptists; and it is doubtful whether the allegation against Mr. Gorton, that he was opposed either to churches or magistracy, could be sustained. A letter from the Hon. Samuel Eddy, inserted in a note to Winthrop's Journal, vol. ii. p. 58, after mentioning that Gorton was in office almost constantly, after the establishment of a government, says: "It would be a remarkable fact, that a man should be an enemy to magistracy, to religion, in short, a bad man, and yet constantly enjoy the confidence of his fellow townsmen, and receive from them the highest honors in their gift."

The proposition to submit, either to Massachusetts or to Plymouth, did not meet with a very prompt reception by the aggrieved party at Pawtuxet. But, in September, 1642, four of them (William Arnold, Robert Cole, William Carpenter, and Benedict Arnold,) appeared before the General Court, at Boston, and yielded themselves and their lands, to be governed and protected by Massachusetts. They were accepted, and Winthrop acknowledges that Massachusetts was desirous to spread her sway over the whole of the rising colonies around the Narraganset Bay. The right of these individuals to submit to the jurisdiction of Massachusetts must be denied; for the territory had been purchased by Mr. Williams, and sold to his companions and others, with the evident design, and the implied, if not express condition, that a new colony be established, as a refuge from the laws of Massachusetts, as well as from oppression elsewhere. To invite the extension of these laws over any portion of the colony, was to defeat the purpose of its settlement, and was, virtually, a violation of the covenant which the settlers had subscribed.

But if these individuals had possessed the right to yield allegiance to Massachusetts, their surrender could not bind their fellow-citizens, and give to Massachusetts any claim to obedience from Mr. Gorton, or any other inhabitant of Providence. Yet Massachusetts immediately assumed a jurisdiction over all the inhabitants of Providence. In October, the Governor and three of the assistants signed a warrant, requiring them to submit to Massachusetts;* and commanding Mr. Gorton and his friends to come to Boston, to answer to the complaints of Mr. Arnold and his associates. To this summons a reply was returned, dated November 20, and signed by Mr. Gorton and eleven other persons, in which they denied the authority of Massachusetts, and refused to obey.† This answer is said to have been long, mystical, and contemptuous; but the principle, which it maintained, was, indisputably, sound.

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* Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 113.

† Backus, vol. i. p. 120. These persons were Samuel Gorton, Randal Holden, Robert Potter, John Wickes, John Warner, Richard Waterman, William Woodale, John Greene, Francis Weston, Richard Carder, Nicholas Power, and Sampson Shatton.

Mr. Gorton, and his eleven friends, thought it prudent to remove from Providence. They accordingly crossed the Pawtuxet river, the southern boundary of the territory purchased by Mr. Williams. They obtained from Miantinomo the cession of a tract of country, called Shawomet, afterwards named Warwick, for which they paid one hundred and forty-four fathoms of wampum.* Here they fixed their residence; but, if the object of their removal was to escape the grasp of Massachusetts, they fared like many others, who have fled from apparent into real danger. Two Indian sachems, Pomham and Sochonocho, who lived at Shawomet and Pawtuxet, claimed the territory as their own, and went to Boston, in June, 1643, where they complained of Mr. Gorton and his friends, as having taken their lands from them. These sachems then made a surrender of themselves, and of the lands which they claimed, to Massachusetts, and promised fidelity, for themselves and their descendants.

It appears, however, that Miantinomo, as the greatest and most powerful sachem, claimed the right to dispose of the land.† Pomham himself had signed the deed; and he and Sochonocho, as subordinate sachems, seem to have had no authority to dispute the validity of the sale, or to cede the territory to Massachusetts. Roger Williams, the best authority on a question touching the usages of the Indians, says, in a letter written several years afterwards, to the General Court of Massachusetts, concerning this transaction: "What was done was according to the law and tenor of the natives, I take it, in all New-England and America, viz. that the inferior sachems and subjects shall plant and remove at the pleasure of the highest and supreme sachems; and I humbly conceive, that it pleaseth the Most High and Only Wise to make use of such a bond of authority over them, without which they could not long subsist in human societies, in this wild condition wherein they are."

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* This sum, at 5s. 8d. per fathom, was 40l. 16s. The deed was dated January 12, 1642--3. Backus, vol. i. p. 120.

† Miantinomo was summoned to Boston, where he asserted his claim, but his arguments were not satisfactory to the Court. It was not convenient to admit his pretensions; and the Court were, we may suppose, scrupulous in examining his proofs.

These facts must be deemed a sufficient proof, that Mr. Gorton and his friends had a fair title to the lands, or, at least, that they must be acquitted of the charge of defrauding the inferior sachems. But Massachusetts was not destitute of the inclination, which all states have usually possessed, to extend her authority. The submission of these sachems gave her a plausible pretext; and her rulers again summoned Gorton and his friends to appear at Boston, informing them that they were within the jurisdiction of Massachusetts. They again refused; and an armed force of forty men was sent to Shawomet, who seized Mr. Gorton and ten of his friends, and carried them to Boston, where they were imprisoned. Their cattle were carried away with them, their property otherwise injured or seized, and their families left to the mercy of the Indians.

At Boston, they were tried for their lives, not for any specific civil crime, but on the general charge of being enemies to true religion, and to civil authority. They were saved from death, by a majority, it is said, of two votes only. They were, nevertheless, sentenced to a severe punishment. Mr. Gorton was ordered to be confined at Charlestown, and the others in different towns. Each was compelled to wear an iron chain, fast bolted round the leg, and in this manner to labor. If they spoke to any person, except an officer of church or state, they were to suffer death. They were kept at labor during the winter, and were then banished from Massachusetts, and from the lands at Shawomet, on pain of death.

Mr. Gorton, and two of his friends, afterwards went to England, where they obtained an order from the Earl of Warwick and the other commissioners of the plantations, dated August 19, 1644, requiring Massachusetts not to molest the settlers at Shawomet. Massachusetts reluctantly complied, and Mr. Gorton and his followers occupied their lands in quiet. Mr. Gorton lived to a great age.*

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* "Gorton," says Hutchinson, (vol. i. p. 117) "published an account of his sufferings. Mr. Winslow, the agent for Massachusetts, answered him. In 1665, he preferred his petition to the commissioners sent over by King Charles the Second, for recompense for the wrongs done him by Massachusetts, alleging, that besides his other sufferings, he and his friends had eighty head of cattle taken and sold. Massachusetts, in their answer, charge him with hereti-

We have stated these proceedings at considerable length, because they are connected with the history of Mr. Williams. They exhibit strongly the temper of those times. The conduct of Massachusetts none will now defend. It was a manifest usurpation, and a cruel abuse of power. It is a profitable example of the manifold evils of erecting the civil government into a court of inquisition. It was the alleged heresies and blasphemies of Mr. Gorton and his friends, against which the edge of this persecution was directed; and these unhappy men narrowly escaped the fate which, a few years later, befel the Quakers. The rulers and clergy of Massachusetts, undoubtedly, thought that they were impelled by an honest zeal for the purity of religion and the glory of God. Their conduct proves, that a being so fallible as man, is unfit to be intrusted with power over the conscience.

It is difficult to ascertain the true character and real opinions of Mr. Gorton. If the statements of his opponents could be safely received, we should view him as a wild and turbulent fanatic. But we have seen much reason to distrust the representations, which writers of that age have furnished of Mr. Gorton, and others. He was, unquestionably, a bold, zealous, eloquent man, of considerable talents and learning, and easily exasperated, by opposition, to stubborn and contumacious resistance. He possessed the art of securing the firm attachment of his friends; a proof that he possessed some virtues, besides consistency of character. A competent authority, quoted in a preceding page, has testified to the general purity of his morals, and to the high estimation in which he was held

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cal tenets, both in religion and civil government, and with an unjust possession of the Indian lands in the vicinity of the colonies, for the sake of disturbing their peace; and add, that the goods which they seized did not amount to the charge of their prosecution; but they do not sufficiently vindicate their seizing their persons or goods, without the limits of their jurisdiction, and conclude with hoping that his Majesty will excuse any circumstantial error in their proceedings." In the appendix of Hutchinson's first volume, is a Defence by Gorton, dated Warwick, June 30, 1669, and addressed to Nathaniel Morton, in which the charges in the Memorial are discussed with an ability, which shows that Gorton could write, when he chose, clearly and forcibly.

by his fellow-citizens, as indicated by the fact, that, "from the first establishment of government, he was almost constantly in office." As to his religious opinions, it is affirmed, by the same authority, that "he spiritualized every thing, and one would almost have thought that he had taken the tour of Swedenborg."*

It is certain that Roger Williams disapproved Mr. Gorton's religious opinions, but did not consider them as dangerous, or as impairing his civil rights.†

* Winthrop, vol. ii. p. 58, note.

† A gentleman of Providence, William R. Staples, Esq. has been engaged, for some time, in preparing a revised edition of Gorton's work, entitled "Simplicity's Defence against Seven Headed Policy," with extensive notes and appendices. This book, it is hoped, will soon be published, and will furnish the means of forming a correct opinion concerning Gorton, and the transactions in which he was a party and a sufferer.

CHAPTER XV.

Birth of Mr. Williams' second son—league of the colonies—war between the Narragansets and Mohegans—capture and death of Miantinomo—Mr. Williams embarks for England.

We have, in the account of Mr. Gorton, advanced beyond other events which claim a notice.

Mr. Williams' second son, Daniel, was born February 13, 1642.

The colonists were alarmed, in 1642, by reports of a meditated design, among the Indians, of a general war. The natives began to acquire the use of fire-arms, with which, together with ammunition, they were supplied by English and Dutch traders. Vigorous measures of defence were accordingly adopted in the colonies. Connecticut proposed to attack the Indians, but Massachusetts refused to join in the war, on the ground that there was not sufficient proof of hostile designs on the part of the Indians. She, nevertheless, disarmed the natives within her limits. Miantinomo came to Boston, and protested that he was innocent.

The year 1643 was made memorable in the history of New-England, by the union of the colonies. On the 19th of May, articles of confederation were signed, at Boston, by the Commissioners of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New-Haven and Plymouth, by which these four colonies formed a league, under the name of "the United Colonies of New-England." The preface to the articles explains the objects of the confederation:

"Whereas we all came into these parts of America with one and the same end and aim, namely, to advance the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to enjoy the liberties of the Gospel in purity with peace; and whereas, by our settling, by the wise providence of God, we are further dispersed upon the sea-coasts and rivers than was at first intended, so that we cannot, according to our desire, with convenience communicate in one government and jurisdiction, and whereas we live encompassed with people of

several nations and strange languages, which hereafter may prove injurious to us or our posterity; and forasmuch as the natives have formerly committed sundry insolences and outrages upon several plantations of the English, and have of late combined themselves against us; and seeing, by reason of the sad distractions in England, (which they have heard of) and by which they know we are hindered both from that humble way of seeking advice and reaping those comfortable fruits of protection, which, at other times, we might well expect; we, therefore, do conceive it our bounden duty, without delay, to enter into a present consociation among ourselves, for mutual help and strength in all future concernment, that, as in nation and religion, so in other respects, we be and continue one."*

By the articles, it was stipulated, that two commissioners from each of the colonies should be chosen, to meet annually, at Boston, Hartford, New-Haven and Plymouth, in successive years, and that this Congress should determine questions of peace or war, and consult for the general welfare of the colonies. This league continued till the year 1686. It had a beneficial effect, and was probably the germ from which sprung the confederation, and the subsequent union of the States, under our present happy government. Rhode-Island was never allowed the honor of an admission into the New-England confederacy. The want of a charter was, at first, the pretext; but when the charter was obtained, there was no more disposition than before to forgive this offending sister, and admit her to the privileges of the family compact. The second charter itself was offensive to the other colonies, for it recognised, as a fundamental principle, "a full liberty in religious concernments." The exclusion of Rhode-Island from the confederacy exposed her to many inconveniences and dangers. She was left without defence, except by her own citizens, and a law of the New-England Congress virtually forbad her to purchase arms and ammunition for her own protection. But the influence of Mr. Williams among the Indians preserved the colony from perils, to which the inexorable aversion of her sister colonies had abandoned her. It was happy for those colonies, that their conduct met

* Winthrop, vol. ii. p. 101.

with no retaliation, but that Mr. Williams and his colony steadily employed their influence to appease the ire of the savages, and to protect their countrymen.

A war soon commenced between Miantinomo and Uncas, the Mohegan sachem. In 1637, Miantinomo made an agreement with the government of Massachusetts, not to fight, without their consent, with any of the Indians, and particularly not to invade Uncas. In the next year, there was a tripartite agreement made at Hartford, between Miantinomo, Uncas and the English, in which it was stipulated, that those sachems should not make war on each other, for any alleged injuries, without an appeal to the English. In the spring of the year 1643, an attempt, it was said, was made to assassinate Uncas, by a Pequod Indian, one of his subjects, and it was suspected that he was incited to this act by Miantinomo. Other attempts, it is alleged, were made to take the life of Uncas, and in the same year, the two sachems came to open war. Miantinomo, with one thousand Narraganset warriors, attacked Uncas, in August, 1643, but was defeated and taken prisoner, though the force of Uncas was only three or four hundred. Miantinomo had a coat of mail, or corslet, with which, it has been said, without sufficient proof, he was furnished by Mr. Gorton. Uncas carried his prisoners to Hartford, at the suggestion of Mr. Gorton,* who wished to save his friend, and therefore wrote to Uncas, threatening him with the resentment of the English, if he did not surrender the captive.

At Hartford, Miantinomo was imprisoned, and application was made to the Commissioners of the United Colonies, at their session at Boston, September, 1643, to determine his fate. The Commissioners thought, that they could neither release him with safety, nor justly put him to death. But they called in to their aid "five of the most judicious elders,"† and these ministers of the Gospel soon agreed, that the unhappy chief ought to die. This answer was accordingly returned, and Miantinomo was delivered to Uncas, who carried him within his own territories, and

* Mr. Williams was absent, having sailed for England in June or July preceding. Had he been in the country, he would certainly have used his influence in favor of Miantinomo.

† Winthrop, vol. ii. p. 131.

there butchered him. The government at Hartford sent twelve or fourteen soldiers with Uncas, as a guard to protect him from the rage of the Narragansets.

This transaction has been defended, on the grounds, that Miantinomo was at the head of a general conspiracy against the English, that he had violated the agreement made at Hartford, and that he was of a turbulent spirit. Other charges were alleged against him; but it is not easy to convince a reader of the present day, that the death of the sachem was either deserved or necessary. That the ministers of the Gospel doomed him to death, while the civilians could hesitate, is remarkable. It is another proof of the danger of permitting the clerical and civil functions to interfere with each other. The clergymen probably treated the case of Miantinomo as a religious question. These good men, we may fear, were misled by that propensity, to which we have before alluded, to regard the events of Jewish history as authoritative precedents. They, perhaps, viewed Miantinomo as a heathen conspirator against the people of God, and deemed him worthy of the fate of Agag. But we turn away, with a sigh, from this melancholy subject, by quoting the words of a distinguished citizen of Providence.* "This was the end of Miantinomo, the most potent Indian prince the people of New-England had ever any concern with; and this was the reward he received for assisting them, seven years before, in their war with the Pequods. Surely a Rhode-Island man may be permitted to mourn his unhappy fate, and drop a tear on the ashes of Miantinomo, who, with his uncle Canonicus, were the best friends and greatest benefactors the colony ever had. They kindly received, fed and protected the first settlers of it, when they were in distress, and were strangers and exiles, and all mankind else were their enemies; and, by this kindness to them, drew upon themselves

* Gov. Hopkins' History of Providence, 2 His. Col. ix. 202. See note to Winthrop, vol. ii. 133, where Mr. Savage says: "With profound regret, I am compelled to express a suspicion, that means of sufficient influence would easily have been found for the security of themselves, the pacifying of Uncas, and the preservation of Miantinomo, had he not encouraged the sale of Shawomet and Pawtuxet to Gorton and his heterodox associates."

the resentment of the neighboring colonies, and hastened the untimely death of the young king."

But let us remember, that it is not easy to judge fairly of the conduct of our fathers. We cannot feel, as they did, the exigencies of their situation. They were weak, and surrounded with powerful tribes, to whom rumor and fear constantly attributed the design to unite in a general conspiracy for the destruction of the English. Miantinomo was suspected, probably without sufficient evidence, of an ambitious purpose to be the head of such a league. The colonists, perhaps, thought themselves justified, by the right of self-preservation, in putting to death the aspiring chief, before he could mature his plans, and execute his purpose.

We must now return to Mr. Williams. The settlements at Providence and on Rhode-Island had continued to increase, for several years. They had hitherto been distinct, but their principles and interests were so similar, that an alliance as one colony became manifestly expedient. The necessity of a charter, from the government of England, was apparent, to protect them from the encroachments of the other colonies, and to give a sanction and authority to their government. A committee was appointed, at an assembly in Newport, September 19, 1642, with instructions to procure a charter. This committee intrusted the agency to Mr. Williams, who, on behalf of that colony and his own, agreed to visit England on this important errand.*

He accordingly left his family, and proceeded to Manhattoes, (New-York) to embark for England. It would have been more convenient and agreeable to sail from Boston, but Mr. Williams was not permitted to enter the territories of Massachusetts, notwithstanding the good service which he had performed for them in their hour of need. But at Manhattoes, he had an opportunity to use his influ-

* In his letter to Major Mason, Mr. Williams says: "Upon frequent exceptions against Providence men, that we had no authority for civil government, I went purposely to England, and, upon my report and petition, the Parliament granted us a charter of government for these parts, so judged vacant on all hands. And upon this, the country about was more friendly, and wrote to us, and treated us as an authorized colony, only the differences of our consciences much obstructed."

ence with the savages, and to display his pacific principles. A war had been provoked, by the wanton cruelty of the Dutch, and the Indians assailed them with great fury. They burnt several houses in the neighborhood of Manhattoes, and killed several persons, among whom was Mrs. Hutchinson, with all but one of her family. The Indians on Long-Island engaged in the war, and burnt several of the Dutchmen's houses. They assaulted the dwelling of Lady Moody, who not long before had left Salem, in consequence of her Baptist principles.* Mr. Williams immediately interceded, and, by his mediation, the Indians were pacified, and peace was restored between them and the Dutch. This event, according to Winthrop, occurred in June, 1643, and we thus learn the date of Mr. Williams' first embarkation for England, which must have taken place soon after.

* Backus, vol. i. p. 148. Winthrop places Lady Moody's removal from Salem after Mr. Williams' mediation with the Long-Island Indians. He speaks respectfully of her character *before* her lapse into the heresy of denying infant baptism: "The Lady Moody, a wise and *anciently religious* woman, being taken with the error of denying baptism to infants, was dealt withal by many of the elders and others, and admonished by the church of Salem, (whereof she was a member) but persisting still, and to avoid further trouble, she removed to the Dutch, against the advice of all her friends. Many others, infected with anabaptism, removed thither also. She was after excommunicated." Winthrop, vol. ii. pp. 123–4.

CHAPTER XVI.

Mr. Williams' first visit to England—Key to the Indian languages—charter—birth of Mr. Williams' youngest child—Bloody Tenet—he returns to America—reception at Boston and Providence—again aids in preventing an Indian war.

Some time during the summer of 1643, Mr. Williams embarked at New-York for his native land. A Dutch ship furnished him with a conveyance, which his own countrymen had denied him. Of the length and incidents of the voyage, we know nothing. The vessel, we may be sure, did not afford the sumptuous accommodations, nor pursue her course over the Atlantic with the celerity, of the packet ships of the present day.

Mr. Williams was not of a mood to be idle, either on the land or on the ocean. He acted on the principle, so beautifully expressed in one of his books, "one grain of time's inestimable sand is worth a golden mountain." He has told us, that he employed his leisure, during this voyage, in preparing the materials of his Key to the Indian languages: "I drew the materials, in a rude lump, at sea, as a private help to my own memory, that I might not, by my present absence, lightly lose what I had so dearly bought in some few years' hardship and charges among the barbarians."*

This book, which is an honorable specimen of his talents as a writer, his industry and acuteness in collecting the words and phrases of an unwritten language, and his benevolent zeal for the welfare of the Indians, must have been nearly finished for the press during the voyage. It was printed before the close of the year 1643, and we may suppose, that after his arrival in England, his endeavors to procure the charter, and other engagements, would leave him little leisure for writing. Of this book we shall have occasion to speak again, in a subsequent chapter, in which we shall briefly review his literary character and writings.

Mr. Williams arrived in England at a most critical period. A civil war then convulsed the nation. The misguided

* Key, p. 17.

King, Charles I. by a series of unjustifiable measures, repugnant to the constitution, and in violation of his own promises and oaths, had provoked an opposition, which issued in a rupture and a bloody war. The King had fled from London, and Parliament had assumed the executive as well as legislative authority. The King and the Parliament levied troops, the sword was unsheathed, and, after a sanguinary struggle of several years, the unhappy Charles died on the scaffold, Episcopacy was abolished, the monarchy was overturned, and a commonwealth, under the protectorship of Cromwell, was established on its ruins.

Mr. Williams arrived at an early period in this disastrous conflict. Its issue was then very doubtful. The Episcopal clergy, and a large portion of the aristocracy, were on the side of the King. With these were joined many of the quiet men of the kingdom, who, while they disapproved the King's conduct, were led by a sentiment of loyalty, and a hope that he might be persuaded to a right course, to rally around the monarch. The patriot would have been satisfied with a guarantee for the rights of the people; and the advocates of religious liberty would have been content with toleration. But the inflexible obstinacy and arbitrary principles of the King daily strengthened his enemies and alienated his friends. It soon became evident, that the King must yield, or the nation must submit to slavery. The contest ended, as every struggle between despotism and liberty, the rulers and the people, must, sooner or later, terminate:

> "For Freedom's battle, once begun,
> Bequeath'd by bleeding sire to son,
> Though baffled oft, is ever won."*

The disturbed condition of the kingdom was, in some respects, favorable to the objects of Mr. Williams. It disposed the Parliament to strengthen themselves, by conciliating the favor of their brethren in America. The House of Commons, in March, 1642–3, passed a memorable resolve, in favor of New-England, exempting its imports and exports from customs, subsidy or taxation. In November, 1643, not long, we presume, after Mr. Williams' arrival, Parliament passed an ordinance, appointing the Earl of

* Byron's Giaour.

Warwick Governor in Chief and Lord High Admiral of the American colonies, with a council of five peers and twelve commoners. It empowered him, in conjunction with his associates, to examine the state of their affairs, to send for papers and persons, to remove governors and officers, and appoint others in their places, and to assign to these such part of the power now granted as he should think proper.*

From these commissioners Mr. Williams easily obtained, by the aid of Sir Henry Vane, one of their number, a charter for the colony of Rhode-Island, dated March 14, 1643–4, in which the most ample powers were granted to the inhabitants to form and maintain a civil government.†

During Mr. Williams' absence, his youngest child, Joseph, was born, in December, 1643, according to Backus, though his tombstone, now standing in the family graveyard, in Cranston, (R. I.) bears an inscription, which states that he was born in 1644.

While in England, Mr. Williams, notwithstanding the pressure of his duties, and the disturbed state of the public mind, found leisure to prepare for the press his celebrated book, entitled "The Bloody Tenet of Persecution for Cause of Conscience, discussed in a conference between Truth and Peace, who, in all tender affection, present to the High Court of Parliament, as the result of their discourse, these amongst other passages of highest consideration." In this book, which he dedicated to Parliament, and which was doubtless read, with interest and profit, by many of the leading men in England,‡ Mr. Williams discusses the great principles of religious liberty, in answer to a letter of the Rev. John Cotton. Mr. Cotton wrote a reply, to which, in accordance with the humor of those times, he gave the quaint and punning title of "The Bloody Tenet Washed, and made White in the Blood of the Lamb." Mr. Williams published a rejoinder, with a title in the same strain, "The Bloody Tenet yet more Bloody, by Mr. Cotton's Endeavor to Wash it White." Of these books we shall give some account, in a subsequent chapter. It may suffice

* Holmes' Annals, vol. i. p. 273.

† For a copy of the charter, see Appendix E.

‡ The Westminster Assembly of Divines, who were then in session, might have learned from this book, if they had read it, lessons which they greatly needed.

now, to say, that Mr. Cotton's argument rests on a sophistical distinction between persecution for religious opinions, and punishment for maintaining errors. He disclaims the right to "persecute any for conscience rightly informed;" but if a man possesses "an erroneous and blind conscience, in fundamental and weighty points," he ought, after suitable admonition, to be punished by the civil magistrate, not because he entertains heretical principles, but because he is wilfully blind and criminally obstinate, in refusing to believe what is clearly revealed in the Scriptures. It seems surprising, that a man of Mr. Cotton's abilities and virtues, could seriously maintain so transparent an absurdity; for if the magistrate be allowed to judge what is "an erroneous and blind conscience," he will decide according to his own construction of the word of God, and will pronounce all who differ from himself to be culpably obstinate, and worthy of punishment. This is precisely the case in every instance of persecution; and the Court of High Commission, who expelled Mr. Cotton from England, would have needed no other defence of their conduct than his own arguments. But Mr. Cotton, though a great and a good man, was misled by his views of the duty of the civil magistrate to interfere, for the preservation of purity in the Christian church, as the civil authorities were required to guard the Jewish religion, and to smite, with unsparing severity, those who renounced or corrupted it.

Mr. Williams, in his book, exposes the fallacy of Mr. Cotton's arguments; and by cogent reasoning and acute expositions of various texts, he establishes this fundamental principle, as alike taught by the Scriptures and by reason, that men are not responsible to each other for their religious opinions, and ought not to suffer molestation, or injury, in their persons or property, for those opinions, nor for the actions by which they are expressed and maintained, unless the civil peace is disturbed. In this case, their conduct ceases to be a matter of religious concern merely, and comes within the cognizance of the civil magistrate. Mr. Williams is very clear and decided on this point. Though he was accused as a turbulent contemner of magistracy and civil order, yet in this book, printed within a few years after his banishment, he says, "I speak not of scandals against the civil state, *which the civil state*

*ought to punish.** This book is written with great ability, it shows learning and taste, and it breathes a tone of courtesy which was not common at that time, and which would not dishonor this age.

Mr. Williams returned to America, in the autumn of 1644. He landed at Boston, September 17. He was emboldened to venture on this forbidden ground, by the following letter from several noblemen and other members of Parliament, addressed "To the Right Worshipful the Governor and Assistants, and the rest of our worthy friends in the plantation of Massachusetts Bay, in New-England:"

"Our much honored friends:

"Taking notice some of us of long time of Mr. Roger Williams' good affections and conscience, and of his sufferings by our common enemy and oppressors of God's people, the prelates, as also of his great industry and travels in his printed Indian labors, in your parts, (the like whereof we have not seen extant from any part of America) and in which respect it hath pleased both Houses of Parliament to grant unto him, and friends with him, a free and absolute charter of civil government for those parts of his abode, and withal sorrowfully resenting, that amongst good men (our friends) driven to the ends of the world, exercised with the trials of a wilderness, and who mutually give good testimony, each of the other, (as we observe you do of him, and he abundantly of you,) there should be such a distance; we thought it fit, upon divers considerations, to profess our great desires of both your utmost endeavors of nearer closing and of ready expressing those good affections, (which we perceive you bear to each other) in effectual performance of all friendly offices. The rather because of those bad neighbors you are likely to find too near you in Virginia, and the unfriendly visits from the west of England and from Ireland. That howsoever it may please the Most High to shake our foundations, yet the report of your peaceable and prosperous plantations may be some refreshings to your true and faithful friends."

This letter procured for Mr. Williams permission to proceed unmolested to Providence, but it produced no relaxa-

* Bloody Tenet, p. 64.

tion of the policy of Massachusetts towards him. Mr. Hubbard (p. 349) says: "Upon the receipt of the said letter, the Governor and magistrates of the Massachusetts found, upon examination of their hearts, they saw no reason to condemn themselves for any former proceedings against Mr. Williams; but for any offices of Christian love, and duties of humanity, they were very willing to maintain a mutual correspondency with him. But as to his dangerous principles of separation, unless he can be brought to lay them down, they see no reason why to concede to him, or any so persuaded, free liberty of ingress and egress, lest any of their people should be drawn away with his erroneous opinions." The aversion to Mr. Williams' principles, both religious* and political, was not abated by his return with a charter, which invested the heretical colony with the dignity of an independent government, and armed

* Massachusetts was the more disinclined to show favor to Mr. Williams and his colony, because the Baptists began to multiply. A Baptist church was formed about this time, in Newport, by Dr. John Clarke and a few others, and in Massachusetts itself the new doctrine spread. The General Court was aroused, therefore, to an effort to crush the growing sect; and no method seemed to promise more success, than to wield against it a legislative denunciation, edged by an appeal to the popular dread of anabaptism:

"Immortale odium, et nunquam sanabile vulnus."

They accordingly passed the following act, in November, 1644:

"Forasmuch as experience hath plentifully and often proved, that since the first rising of the Anabaptists, about one hundred years since, they have been the incendiaries of the commonwealth, and the infectors of persons in main matters of religion, and the troublers of churches in all places where they have been, and that they who have held the baptizing of infants unlawful, have usually held other errors or heresies therewith, though they have (as other heretics use to do) concealed the same till they spied out a fit advantage and opportunity to vent them, by way of question or scruple; and whereas divers of this kind have, since our coming into New-England, appeared amongst ourselves, some whereof (as others before them) denied the ordinance of magistracy, and the lawfulness of making war, and others the lawfulness of magistrates, and their inspection into any breach of the first table; which opinions, if they should be connived at by us, are like to be increased amongst us, and so must necessarily bring guilt upon us, infection and trouble to the churches, and hazard to the whole commonwealth; it is ordered and agreed, that, if any person or persons, within this jurisdiction, shall either openly condemn or oppose the baptizing of infants, or go about secretly to seduce others from the approbation or use thereof, or shall purposely

her with the shield of the parent state. Her example became, thenceforth, more dangerous; and the united colonies steadily pursued towards her an unfriendly policy.

Mr. Williams' return to Providence was greeted by a voluntary expression of the attachment and gratitude of its inhabitants, which is one of the most satisfactory testimonies to his character. They met him at Seekonk, with fourteen canoes, and carried him across the river to Providence. This simple act of respect must have been highly grateful to his feelings. It does equal honor to him, and to his fellow citizens, who thus showed themselves capable of estimating, in a manner worthy of freemen, the services of a friend and public benefactor.*

We may suppose, that Mr. Williams, after his return, immediately endeavored to carry into operation the charter which he had procured with so much labor and expense. But it was a work which required time, to bring the inhabitants of the several settlements at Providence, Newport, Portsmouth and Warwick, to agree on a form of government, and unite as one colony. The charter prescribed no form of civil polity, and it was accordingly necessary to manage the negotiations between the towns with much delicacy and skill.

In the mean time, Mr. Williams had another opportunity to interpose his beneficent agency in favor of the colonists. The Narraganset Indians, exasperated by what they judged to be the murder of their favorite sachem, Miantinomo, were bent on vengeance, with the unrelenting ferocity of savages. They alleged, that they had paid wampum, to

depart the congregation at the ministration of the ordinance, or shall deny the ordinance of magistracy, or their lawful right and authority to make war, or to punish the outward breaches of the first table, and shall appear to the Court wilfully and obstinately to continue therein, after due time and means of conviction, every such person or persons shall be *sentenced to banishment*." Backus, vol. i. p. 150.

* This incident is related by Richard Scott, in his letter, inserted at the close of the "New-England Firebrand Quenched." Mr. Scott disliked Mr. Williams, and his comment on the transaction referred to is an instance of the effect of a man's feelings on his judgment respecting the conduct of others. "The man," he says, "being hemmed in, in the middle of the canoes, was so elevated and transported out of himself, that I was condemned in myself, that amongst the rest, I had been an instrument to set him up in his pride and folly."

the amount of forty pounds, as a ransom for the chieftain's life. They therefore resolved on war with the Mohegans, until they should obtain the head of Uncas. The commissioners of the colonies, at their meeting in Hartford, in September, 1644, appeased their animosity for a while, the Narraganset sachems promising not to commence hostilities against Uncas until after the next planting time, and likewise after thirty days' notice to the government of Massachusetts and Connecticut.

The commissioners, this year, passed an act, forbidding any person to sell any kind of arms or ammunition to an Indian, or to repair any weapon for him, under a heavy penalty. This measure was called for by the rapid progress of the Indians in the use of fire-arms. The law had, it is probable, some effect, but like similar laws in regard to the Indians, in later times, unprincipled men found many ways to evade it.

The Narragansets soon commenced the war, and killed several of the Mohegans. An extraordinary meeting of the commissioners was held in Boston, in July, 1645, when it was judged necessary to send messengers to the sachems of the Narragansets and Mohegans, requiring them to suspend hostilities and come to Boston. The messengers were informed by the Narragansets, that they were resolved on war. They accordingly returned to Boston, with a letter from Mr. Williams, informing the government, that the Narragansets would soon commence hostilities against the colonists, except at Providence and Rhode-Island, the Indians having, from regard to Mr. Williams, agreed to maintain a neutrality with these settlements.

The commissioners immediately resolved to raise a force of three hundred men,* to march immediately for the protection of the Mohegans. A part of the levy from Massachusetts marched accordingly. Two messengers were again sent to the Narraganset sachems, with directions to take Mr. Benedict Arnold with them as their interpreter. But they could not find Mr. Arnold at Providence, and learned that he dared not venture among the Indians without a guard. But Mr. Williams had been sent for by the

* From Massachusetts, 190; Plymouth, 40; Connecticut, 40; New-Haven, 30.

sachems, doubtless to advise them in this crisis. The messengers, therefore, solicited his aid, and he served them as an interpreter. By his mediation, Passacus,* the sachem, and other chief men, were persuaded to go to Boston, where a treaty was concluded between the commissioners and the sachems, by which the latter agreed to make peace with Uncas, and to pay the colonists two thousand fathoms of wampum, at different times, as a remuneration for their expenses in the war. This treaty was concluded in August, 1645, and the sachems left a child of Passacus, a child of his brother, and two other children of persons of note, as a security for the faithful performance of the treaty.†

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* He was a brother of Miantinomo, and succeeded him.

† The following note, in Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 134, may be properly quoted here:

"Uncas, the sachem of the Mohegans, was hated and envied by the Narragansets, for his attachment to the English, and the distinguishing favors shown him in return. In 1638, having entertained some of the Pequods, after the war with them, and fearing he had given offence, he came to the Governor at Boston, and brought a present, which was at first refused, but afterwards, the Governor being satisfied that he had no designs against the English, it was accepted, and he promised to submit to such orders as he should receive from the English, concerning the Pequods, and also concerning the Narragansets, and his behavior towards them, and concluded his speech with these words: 'This heart (laying his hand upon his breast) is not mine, but yours. Command me any difficult service, and I will do it; I have no men, but they are all yours. I will never believe any Indian against the English any more.' He was dismissed, with a present, went home joyful, carrying a letter of protection for himself and men through the English plantations, and never was engaged in hostilities against any of the colonies, although he survived Philip's war, and died a very old man, after the year 1680.

"The Narragansets failed in the payment of the wampum, and in 1646, messengers were sent to them from the commissioners, but Passacus, their chief sachem, not attending, in 1647 the message was repeated, and he then pretended sickness, and sent Ninigret, a sachem of the Nianticks, to act in his behalf, and told the messenger, that it was true he had not kept his covenant, but added, that he entered into it for fear of the army which he saw, and that he was told, that if he did not set his hand to such and such things, the army should go against the Narragansets. When Ninigret appeared, he asked how the Narragansets became indebted to the English in so large a sum, and being told that it was for the expense the Narragansets had put them to by their breach of covenant, he then pleaded poverty, but the commissioners insisting on the demand, he

Thus was New-England saved, a second time, from a general Indian war, by means, in no small part, of the good offices of Mr. Williams. The small English army was disbanded, and the 4th of September was observed, by the colonists, as a day of thanksgiving to God. This measure was worthy of our pious ancestors. We may hope, that while they justly ascribed the praise of their deliverance to God, they felt some emotions of gratitude towards their exiled benefactor.

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sent some of his people back to procure what he could, but brought two hundred fathoms only. They gave him leave to go home, and allowed him further time. The whole was not paid until 1650, when Capt. Atherton, with twenty men, was sent to demand the arrears, which was then about three hundred fathoms. Passacus put him off some time with dilatory answers, not suffering him to come into his presence. In the mean while his people were gathering together, but the Captain, carrying his twenty soldiers to the door of the wigwam, entered himself, with his pistol in his hand, leaving his men without, and seizing Passacus by the hair of his head, drew him from the midst of a great number of his attendants, threatening that if one of them offered to stir, he would despatch him. Passacus presently paid down what was demanded, and the English returned in safety. Ninigret, after this, began to stir up new troubles from the Nianticks, but upon sending Capt. Davis, with a troop of horse, into the Indian country, he was struck with a panic, and would not be seen by the English until he had assurance of his life, and then he readily complied with their demands, and they and the other Indians continued quiet many years, until by familiar intercourse, and the use of fire-arms, they became more emboldened, and engaged in the war in 1675, which issued in their total destruction. *Records of United Colonies.*"

CHAPTER XVII.

Letters to John Winthrop—organization of the government—vote of money to Mr. Williams—agreement of several inhabitants of Providence—dissentions—Indian troubles.

We have now the pleasure of presenting the first of a number of unpublished letters, addressed to John Winthrop, the son of Governor Winthrop, of Massachusetts.* Mr. Winthrop resided, for several years, at Nameug, or Pequod, now New-London, in Connecticut. It appears from one of the letters, that Mr. Williams became acquainted with him in England; and the correspondence which we shall introduce, will show that the friendship was strong and mutual. We cannot stay to offer comments on the letters. They relate to politics, literature, agriculture, and various other topics, while religion is diffused, like a grateful fragrance, through them all.

This and other letters are dated at Narraganset, or Cawcawmqussick, (now North-Kingstown,) where Mr. Williams, about this time, purchased an estate, and built a trading house, which he afterwards sold, to obtain money for his second visit to England.

"For his honored, kind friend, Mr. John Winthrop, at Pequod, these.

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* Allen says of him, in his Dictionary, "His fine genius was improved by a liberal education in the Universities of Cambridge and of Dublin, and by travel upon the continent. He arrived at Boston, in October, 1635, with authority to make a settlement in Connecticut, and the next month despatched a number of persons to build a fort at Saybrook. He was chosen Governor in 1657, and again in 1659, and from that period he was annually re-elected till his death. In 1661, he went to England, and procured a charter, incorporating Connecticut and New-Haven into one colony. He died at Boston, April 5, 1676, in the 71st year of his age. He possessed a rich variety of knowledge, and was particularly skilled in chemistry and physic. His valuable qualities as a gentleman, a christian, a philosopher, and a magistrate, secured to him universal respect."

"*Nar.* 22, 4, 45, (*so called.*)*

"Sir,

"Best salutations, &c. William Cheesbrough, now come in, shall be readily assisted, for yours and his own sake. Major Bourne is come in. I have, by Providence, seen divers papers, (returning now yours thankfully,) which are snatched from me again. I have, therefore, been bold to send you the Medulla and the Magnalia Dei. Pardon me, if I request you, in my name, to transfer the paper to Captain Mason, who saith he loves me. God is love; in him only I desire to be yours ever,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"Loving salutes to your dearest and kind sister.

"I have been very sick of cold and fever, but God hath been gracious to me. I am not yet resolved of a course for my daughter. If your powder, with directions, might be sent without trouble, I should first wait upon God in that way: however, it is best to wait on him. If the ingredients be costly, I shall thankfully account. I have books that prescribe powders, &c. but yours is probatum in this country."

We know little of the condition of Providence at this time. We may presume, however, that it continued to flourish. It is stated, that about this period, there were, in Providence and its vicinity, one hundred and one men, fit to bear arms.† This fact indicates a large increase of population, in a period of less than ten years.

After a considerable lapse of time, the inhabitants of Providence, Portsmouth, Newport, and Warwick, agreed on a form of civil government. This form, says Mr. Backus, provided for the election of "a President and four Assistants annually, who had the executive power, were judges in the courts of law and kept the peace. An As-

* Mr. Williams commonly employed the numerical mode of referring to the month and day of the week. He usually added to the date the words (so called) or (ut vulgo), intimating some dissent from the common computation of time; but what his own views were does not appear. The pertinacity with which he adhered to this practice is characteristic of his punctilious regard to trifles, when he thought truth was concerned.

† Holmes, vol. i. p. 279.

sembly, of six commissioners, or representatives, from each town, made laws, and ordered their general affairs; but their laws must be sent to every town, to be deliberately considered in their town meetings, from whence the clerk was to send an account of their votes to the General Recorder; and, if the majority of the towns approved the law, it was confirmed, if not, it was disannulled. The Assembly chose yearly a Treasurer and a General Recorder and General Sergeant, which are only other names for a Secretary and Sheriff. In each town, six persons were yearly chosen, who were called the Town Council, who had the powers of a Court of Probate, of granting licenses to inn-keepers and retailers, and the care of the poor."

The first General Assembly met at Portsmouth, May 19, 1647, when John Coggshall was chosen President, Roger Williams assistant for Providence, John Sanford for Portsmouth, William Coddington for Newport, and Randall Holden for Warwick. William Dyer was chosen Recorder. They agreed upon a body of laws, chiefly taken from the laws of England, with the addition of a few suited to their particular circumstances. In the introduction of this code, the form of government established is called "democratical, that is to say, a government held by the free and voluntary consent of all, or the greater part of the free inhabitants."

The code, which contains nothing except civil regulations, concludes thus: "Otherwise than thus, what is herein forbidden, all men may walk as their consciences persuade them, every one in the name of his God. And let the lambs of the Most High walk, in this colony, without molestation, in the name of Jehovah, their God, forever and ever." This noble principle was thus established, as one of the fundamental laws, at the first Assembly under the charter. It is indigenous to the Rhode-Island soil, and is the glory of the state.

Mr. Williams had a large share in thus organizing the government. His services were gratefully recognized by the Assembly, who, at their first session, adopted the following resolution:*

* A vote passed, granting Mr. Williams "leave to suffer a native to kill fowl at Narraganset, and to sell a little wine or strong waters to some natives in sickness."

"That forasmuch as Mr. Roger Williams hath taken great pains, and expended much time, in obtaining the charter for this province, of our noble Lords and Governors, be it enacted and established, that, in regard to his so great trouble, charges and good endeavors, we do freely give and grant unto the said Mr. Roger Williams an hundred pounds, to be levied out of the three towns, viz.: fifty pounds out of Newport, thirty pounds of Portsmouth, twenty pounds out of Providence; which rate is to be levied and paid in by the last of November." Backus, vol. i. p. 199.

This grant of one hundred pounds was voted, but for some reason, Mr. Williams never received it all.* It was, undoubtedly, a very inadequate compensation for his toils and expenses, in procuring the charter.

The following very characteristic letter belongs here. The seal is a rude representation of a tulip, or other flower, the impression sunk, and not raised:

"For his worshipful, and his much honored, kind friend, Mr. John Winthrop, at Nameaug, these.

"*Cawcawmsqussick*, 28, 3, 47, (*so called.*)

"Worthy Sir,

"Loving respects and salutations to your kind self and your kindest companion. Some while since, you desired a word of direction about the hay seed. I desired my brother to collect his own and other neighbors' observations about it, which (with his respects presented) amounts to this.

"First, usually three bushels seed to one acre land.

"2. It hath been known to spread, to mat, &c. the Indian hills being only scraped or levelled.

"3. This may be done at any time of the year, but the sooner the better.

"4. It is best to sow it upon a rain preceding.

"5. Some say let the ripe grass stand until it seed, and

* In some considerations respecting rates, written in 1681, Mr. Williams says: "No charters are obtained without great suit, favor, or charges. Our first cost one hundred pounds, (though I never received it all,) our second about a thousand, Connecticut about six thousand." Mr. Williams was afterwards accused by Mr. Coddington, as a hireling, who, for the sake of money, went to England for the charter! See Coddington's letter, at the end of New-England Firebrand Quenched.

the wind disperse it (susque deque) up and down, for it is of that thriving and homogeneal nature with the earth, that the very dung of cattle that feeds on it will produce the grain.

"6. The offs, which can hardly be severed from the seed, hath the same productive faculty.

"7. Sow it not in an orchard, near fruit trees, for it will steal, and rob the trees, &c.

"Sir: Concerning Indian affairs, reports are various; lies are frequent. Private interests, both with Indians and English, are many; yet these things you may and must do. First, kiss truth where you evidently, upon your soul, see it. 2. Advance justice, though upon a child's eyes. 3. Seek and make peace, if possible, with all men. 4. Secure your own life from a revengeful, malicious arrow or hatchet. I have been in danger of them, and delivered yet from them; blessed be his holy name, in whom I desire to be

"Your worship's, in all unfeigned
"respects and love,
"ROGER WILLIAMS."

The following letter relates, probably, to the collection of the wampum to be paid to the commissioners, by the Narragansets, in accordance with the treaty.

"*Cawcawmsqussick*, 20, 6, 47, (*so called.*)

"Sir,

"Due respects presented, &c. I am importuned by Ninigret,* in express words, to present his respects and love to your honored father, and to the honored President of the commissioners, giving great thanks for the great favor and kindness showed him. Withal, he prays you earnestly to present his humble suit, that since he, by reason of his travel and illness, can, as yet, get no further towards his own home, and finds he must have much work with the natives of these parts, before he repair home, and time to

* A sachem of the Nianticks, a branch of the Narraganset tribe. Ninigret's principal residence, and the centre of his dominions, was at Wekapaug, now Westerly, Rhode-Island. It was formerly a part of Stonington, Connecticut. Thatcher's Indian Biography, vol. i. p. 212.

spend exceeding fast, it may be accounted no breach of faithfulness of his promise, if he finish the contribution he is now about, within a few days after the punctual time. The other sachems, upon agitations, have promised their utmost concurrence, to finish all within a month from the day of his promise, which time he earnestly requests may be assented to, hoping to make payment before, but not questioning by the expiration of that time. By this bearer, he humbly prays a word of answer, that, with the more cheerful concurrence of the other sachems, (who join with him in this request,) he may be the more cheerful in the work. Sir, I discern nothing but reality and reason in his request; otherwise, I should not dare to molest you, or those honored persons whom it concerns; to whom, with my humble respects, and to yourself presented, beseeching the Most High to be your portion, I rest,

"Your worship's unworthy

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"Pesickosh desired me to present his great thanks for his child.

"Sir: Your man is with me at present writing, well, this last of the week, and will be going instantly. Humble thanks for the sight of papers from England. The sea will be the sea till it be no more. Revel. 21.

"Respects to your dearest."

The following agreement, written, evidently, by Mr. Williams, and signed by himself and several of the citizens of Providence, is a proof of his pacific principles, and of his desire for the peace and welfare of the colony:

"Considering the great mercy afforded unto us, in this liberty thus to meet together, being denied to many of our countrymen in most parts, especially in our poor native country, now deploring their distressed condition in most sad and bloody calamities: That ingratitude and disacknowledgments for favors received, are just causes for the deprivation of them, together with home divisions and home conspiracies, the ruination of families, towns and countries. Moreover, the many plots and present endeavors, at home and abroad, not only to disturb our peace and liberties, but utterly to root up both root and branch of this

our being; that government held forth through love, union and order, although by few in number and mean in condition, yet (by experience) hath withstood and overcome mighty opposers; and, above all, the several unexpected deliverances of this poor plantation, by that mighty Providence who is still able to deliver us, through love, union and order. Therefore, being sensible of these great and weighty premises, and now met together to consult about our peace and liberty, whereby our families and posterity may still enjoy these favors; and that we may publicly declare unto all the free discharge of all our consciences and duties, whereby it may appear upon record that we are not wilfully opposite, nor careless and senseless, and thereby the means of our own and others' ruin and destruction;—and especially in testimony of our fidelity and cordial affection unto one another here present, that so there may be a current placable proceeding, we do faithfully and unanimously, by this our subscription, promise unto each other to keep unto these ensuing particulars: First, that the foundation in love may appear among us, what causes of difference have heretofore been given, either by word or misbehavior, in public or private, concerning particular or general affairs, by any of us here present, not to mention or repeat them in the assembly, but that love shall cover the multitude of them in the grave of oblivion. Secondly, that union may proceed from love, we do promise to keep constant unto those several engagements made by us, both unto our town and colony, and that, to the uttermost of our powers and abilities to maintain our lawful rights and privileges, and to uphold the government of this plantation. Also, that love may appear in union, we desire to abandon all causeless fears and jealousies of one another, only aiming at the general and particular peace and union of this town and colony. Lastly, for our more orderly proceeding in this assembly, whereby love and union may appear in order, if in our consultations differences in judgment shall arise, then moderately in order, through argumentation, to agitate the same; considering the cause, how far it may be hurtful, or conducing unto our union, peace and liberty, and accordingly act, not after the will or person of any, but unto the justice and righteousness of the cause. Again, if such cause shall be presented, wherein such difficulties

shall appear, that evident arguments cannot be given for present satisfaction, but that either town or colony, or both, shall suffer, then to take into consideration a speech of a beloved friend, "better to suffer an inconvenience than a mischief," better to suspend with a loss that may be inconvenient, than to be totally disunited and bereaved of all rights and liberties, which will be a mischief indeed. Moreover, that offences and distractions may be prevented, that so the current of business may peaceably proceed in this assembly, we do faithfully promise to carry ourselves, in words and behavior, so moderately and orderly as the cause shall permit; and if any of us shall fly out in provoking, scurrilous, exorbitant speeches, and unsuitable behavior, that he or they so doing shall be publicly declared, branded, and noted upon record, to be a covenant violator, and disturber of the union, peace and liberty of this plantation. We do here subscribe, without partiality. Dated December, 1647.

Robert Williams,	William Wickenden,
Roger Williams,	John Tripp,
John Smith,	Thomas Hopkins,
Hugh Bewit,	William Hawkins."

It is a proof, that Mr. Williams was not a very ambitious man, that he put himself entirely on a level with his fellow citizens, and was willing to serve the colony in the subordinate situation of an assistant. He was entitled, from his character and services, to be the first President; but he was, doubtless, disposed to yield his own claims, to conciliate the other towns. His services, as a peace-maker, were often needed.

It could scarcely be expected, that towns, composed of so many discordant materials, would coalesce quietly in one government. The principle on which the colony was founded, made it the resort of many uneasy spirits, who occasioned difficulties which disturbed its peace, and brought undeserved odium on the better portion of the inhabitants.

In May, 1648, Mr. Coddington was elected President, and Jeremiah Clarke, Roger Williams, William Baulstone, and John Smith, Assistants; Philip Sherman, Recorder; and Alexander Partridge, General Sergeant.

In September following, Mr. Coddington and Mr. Part-

ridge applied, in person, to the commissioners of the united colonies, requesting that the island of Rhode-Island might be received as a member of the league, alleging it to be the desire of a majority of the inhabitants. But the commissioners refused to admit them, unless the island were placed under the jurisdiction of Plymouth. It was a happy event for Rhode-Island, that this request was refused, for had it been granted, the effect might have been the separation of the island from the rest of the colony.

In this posture of affairs, Mr. Williams again tried his influence as a peace-maker. In August, 1648, he addressed the following letter to the town of Providence:

"Worthy friends, that ourselves and all men are apt and prone to differ, it is no new thing. In all former ages, in all parts of the world, in these parts, and in our dear native country and mournful state of England, that either part or party is most right in his own eyes, his cause right, his carriage right, his arguments right, his answers right, is as wofully and constantly true as the former. And experience tells us, that when the God of peace hath taken peace from the earth, one spark of action, word or carriage is too powerful to kindle such a fire as burns up towns, cities, armies, navies, nations and kingdoms. And since, dear friends, it is an honor for men to cease from strife; since the life of love is sweet, and union is as strong as sweet; and since you have been lately pleased to call me to some public service and my soul hath been long musing how I might bring water to quench, and not oil or fuel to the flame, I am now humbly bold to beseech you, by all those comforts of earth and heaven which a placable and peaceable spirit will bring to you, and by all those dreadful alarms and warnings, either amongst ourselves, in deaths and sicknesses, or abroad in the raging calamities of the sword, death and pestilence; I say humbly and earnestly beseech you to be willing to be pacifiable, willing to be reconcilable, willing to be sociable, and to listen to the (I hope not unreasonable) motion following: To try out matters by disputes and writings, is sometimes endless; to try out arguments by arms and swords, is cruel and merciless; to trouble the state and Lords of England, is most unreasonable, most chargeable; to trouble our neighbors of other colonies, seems neither safe nor honorable. Methinks, dear friends, the colony now

looks with the torn face of two parties, and that the greater number of Portsmouth, with other loving friends adhering to them, appear as one grieved party; the other three towns, or greater part of them, appear to be another: Let each party choose and nominate three; Portsmouth and friends adhering three, the other party three, one out of each town; let authority be given to them to examine every public difference, grievance and obstruction of justice, peace and common safety: let them, by one final sentence of all or the greater part of them, end all, and set the whole into an unanimous posture and order, and let them set a censure upon any that shall oppose their sentence. One log, without your gentle help, I cannot stir; it is this: How shall the minds of the towns be known? How shall the persons chosen be called? Time and place appointed in any expedition? For myself I can thankfully embrace the help of Mr. Coddington or Mr. Clarke, joined or apart, but how many are there who will attend, (as our distempers are) to neither? It is, gentlemen, in the power of the body to require the help of any of her members, and both King and Parliament plead, that in extraordinary cases they have been forced to extraordinary ways for common safety. Let me be friendly construed, if (for expedition) I am bold to be too forward in this service, and to say, that if within twenty days of the date hereof, you please to send to my house, at Providence, the name of him whom you please to nominate, at your desire I will acquaint all the persons chosen with place and time, unto which in your name I shall desire their meeting within ten days, or thereabouts, after the receipt of your letter. I am your mournful and unworthy ROGER WILLIAMS."

"This address," says Mr. Backus, "had such an effect, that Mr. Williams was received to act as President of the colony, till their election at Warwick, May 22, 1649."

The following letter to Mr. Winthrop, throws some light on the state of things at that time:

"For my much honored, kind friend, Mr. John Winthrop, at his house, at Nameug, these.

"*Cawcawmsqussick*, 23, 7, 48, (*so called.*)

"Kind Sir,

"Best salutations to your dear selves and loving sister.

I am bold and yet glad to trouble you, that by this occasion I may hear of your welfare. Capt. Mason lately requested me to forbid the Narragansets to hunt at Pequod, and to assure them of his visiting of them if they so did. I have written now an answer, which I am bold to request you to send at your next opportunity. Two days since I was at Providence, and then Mr. Brown was not returned, only he had wrote home some angry passage against the Narragansets, who are now in expectation of some assault from the English. Sir, whether it please God to visit us with peace or war, in life and death I desire to be

"Yours ever in Christ Jesus,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"Sir, our neighbors Mr. Coddington and Capt. Partridge, ten days since, returned from Plymouth with propositions for Rhode-Island to subject to Plymouth; to which himself and Portsmouth incline; our other three towns decline, and Mr. Holden and Mr. Warner, of Warwick, came from thence also, and they say, gave satisfaction why they dare not (the other three towns) depart from the charter. Sir, in this division of our neighbors, I have kept myself unengaged, and presented motions of pacification, amongst which I was bold to propose a reference to your worthy self and some other friend to be chosen; our town yields to it, and Mr. Boston (though opposite) and possibly you may have the trouble and honor of a peace-maker.

"Sir, pray seal the enclosed."

It appears by this letter, and by other evidence, that Plymouth was desirous to add the beautiful island to her territory. Three years before, she claimed it as belonging to her jurisdiction; and Massachusetts insisted on her title to the allegiance of the inhabitants of Pawtuxet and Warwick.* Winthrop says, under the date of May, 1645:†

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* Backus, vol. i. p. 204, &c.

† Journal, vol. ii. 220. Mr. Savage says, in a note, "I rejoice in the defeat of this futile claim by Plymouth, and equally rejoice in the ill success of the attempt by our own people."

We may appropriately introduce here a remarkable document, found in the Massachusetts Records, vol. 3, p. 47:

"Sir, we received lately out of England a charter from the authority of the High Court of Parliament, bearing date 10 December, 1643, whereby the Narraganset Bay, and a certain tract of land

"The government of Plymouth sent one of their magistrates, Mr. Brown, to Aquetneck island, to forbid Mr. Williams, &c. to exercise any of their pretended authority upon the island, claiming it to be within their jurisdiction. Our Court also sent to forbid them to exercise any authority within that part of our jurisdiction at Pawtuxet and Shawomet, and although they had boasted to do great matters there, by virtue of their charter, yet they dared not to attempt any thing."

Connecticut afterwards laid claim to a part of the western territory of Rhode-Island. Thus was the little colony pressed on each side by her more powerful neighbors, who

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wherein Providence and the Island of Aquetneck are included, which we thought fit to give you and other of our countrymen in those parts notice of, that you may forbear to exercise any jurisdiction therein, otherwise to appear at our next General Court, to be holden the first fourth day of the eighth month, to show by what right you claim any such jurisdiction, for which purpose yourself and others, your neighbors, shall have free liberty to come, stay and sojourn, as the occasion of the said business may require.

"Dated at Boston, in the Massachusetts, 27th 6mo. 1645

"To Mr. Roger Williams, of Providence. By order of the Council.
INCREASE NOWELL, Secretary."

No notice of this charter has been found in Winthrop, Hutchinson, or Holmes' Annals. Mr. Williams, in his letter to Major Mason, says:

"Some time after the Pequod war, and our charter from the Parliament, the government of Massachusetts wrote to myself (then chief officer in this colony) of their receiving of a patent from the Parliament for these vacant lands, as an addition to the Massachusetts, &c. and thereupon requiring me to exercise no more authority, &c. for they wrote, their charter was granted some weeks before ours. I returned what I believed righteous and weighty to the hands of my true friend, Mr. Winthrop, the first mover of my coming into these parts, and to that answer of mine I never received the least reply; only it is certain, that at Mr. Gorton's complaint against the Massachusetts, the Lord High Admiral, President, said openly, in a full meeting of the Commissioners, that he knew no other charter for these parts than what Mr. Williams had obtained, and he was sure that charter, which the Massachusetts Englishmen pretended, had never passed the table."

This whole transaction is somewhat mysterious. The rulers in Massachusetts were too upright to assert the existence of such a document, if they had it not in their possession. They were too honest and too politic to forge one, the spuriousness of which could easily be detected. There was, undoubtedly, some mistake, and the silence of the historians corroborates the representation given above by Mr. Williams.

would gladly have enacted, at that early day, the same scene which was long afterwards presented in Poland, though the wrong would certainly have been less flagrant, and the motive less criminal. Thanks to the protection of God, and to the prudent firmness of Mr. Williams and others, the colony escaped all the designs of her neighbors, and has continued till this day, small in territory, but strong in her love of freedom, and consistent in her maintenance of the principles of her founder.

The Indians again disturbed the colonies. "In August, 1648," says Mr. Backus,* "about one thousand Indians from various parts were collected in Connecticut, with three hundred guns among them, and it was reported that they were hired by the Narragansets to fight with Uncas. The magistrates of Hartford sent three horsemen to inquire what they designed, and to let them know, that if they made war with him, the English must defend him, upon which they dispersed. When the commissioners met at Plymouth the next month, they ordered four men to be sent to the Narragansets, with instructions how to treat with them, both concerning their hiring other Indians to war upon Uncas, and also about the tribute of wampum that was behind. Captain Atherton and Captain Prichard undertook the service, and going to Mr. Williams, they procured the sachems to be sent for, but they, hearing that many horsemen were come to take them, shifted for themselves. Passacus fled to Rhode-Island, but soon after, they were, by Mr. Williams' means, delivered of their fears, and came to the messengers as they were desired, and denied their hiring the Mohawks to war against Uncas, though they owned that they had sent them a present."

The following letters to Mr. Winthrop, relating to the concerns of the Indians, with occasional references to the important events which were then transpiring in England, may be properly introduced here:

"For his much honored and beloved Mr. John Winthrop, at Nameug.

"*Cawcawmsqussick*, 10, 8, 48, (*so called.*)

"Sir,

"Best salutations to your dear selves and loving sis-

* Backus, vol. i. p. 194-5.

ter. In my last I intimated a promise of presenting you with what here passeth. Captain Atherton, Captain Prichard, Richard Wood and Strong Tuchell, have been with me (as also Wm. Arnold, instead of his son Benedict, who withdrew himself, though sent unto,) these six or seven days. They were at Niantick two nights. Captain Atherton purposed to visit you, but they appointing their meeting with all the sachems at my house, they came back; and this morning, (the fourth day of the week,) they are departed with good content toward the Bay. From the commissioners they brought several articles, but the main were three; concerning the Mohawks, &c.; 2d, the payment; 3d, Uncas' future safety. To the first, they sent answer (and that they confirmed with many asseverations, and one of them voluntarily took the Englishmen's God to witness) that they gave not a penny to hire the Mohawks against the Mohegans, but that it was wholly wrought by Wussoonkquassin, (which they discovered as a secret) who being bound by Uncas, and Wuttouwuttauoum, Uncas his cousin, having attempted to shoot a Mohawk sachem at that time, resolved with the Mohawks (to whom he also gave peag) to take revenge upon Uncas; Wussoonkquassin sent them word and desired peag of them in the spring, but they profess they consented not, nor sent not a penny, afterwards they sent Waupinhommin up to inquire to Pawcatuck and however they have given some of the Mohegans peag this year, (as they have always done) yet they say they are clear from giving a penny in hire, &c. They confess their enmity against Uncas, and they (to the 2d) will not rest until they have finished their payments, that they may present their complaints against Uncas, who (they say) and other Indians, within these three years, have committed thirteen murders with impunity, being out of their reach in the English protection. This last year they pleaded they were near starved, and, therefore, sent but a small quantity. Now they promise, upon return of their men from hunting this winter, to make a contribution, the next spring another, and so according as they can draw the people to it, will not cease to furnish, and if they die, their children shall fulfil, and that it is their sore grief, &c. with much to this purpose. For Uncas they profess neither directly nor indirectly, to have to do with him, yet hope the

English will not deal partially with him. They desired the English receipt of their peag; I produced the note you sent me, which, because it was not signed with your father's hand or the Treasurer's, &c. the messengers promised to send them one from the Bay, Ninigret, made great lamentation that you had entertained hard thoughts of him in this business, and all the sachems here professed their sorrow and that you had hearkened to Wequashcook, who they say never contributed nor joined in the Pequod wars, and now flatters to draw his neck out of the payments to the English. They hope you will not countenance him to rob Ninigret of those hunting places which the commissioners gave him leave to make use of, and he with the English had fought for with the expense of much treasure and hazard of his life. They desire that he may and Causasenamon and the rest of the Pequods, be as your little dogs, but not as your confederates, which they say is unworthy yourself, &c. Sir, I perceive the English about the Bay inquire after new places. Captain Atherton prays me shortly to convey a letter to you. I forgot one passage that the sachems discovered, that Wussoonkquassin gave peag to the Mohawks to retreat. It seems they are (Switzer like) mercenary, and were hired on and off; these sachems I believe desire cordially to hold friendship with both the English and the Mohawks together; I am confident (whether they lie or not, about Wussoonkquassin) that they never intended hurt against the English nor yourself and yours especially, to whom they profess great respect, and jointly they desire that Wequashcook may come back to Connecticut from whence he went, for if he join with Uncas they suspect he will secretly be a means of some of their deaths. Lastly, whereas they heard that the women with you were something fearful, Ninigret prays Mrs. Winthrop to be assured, that there never was, nor never shall be, to his knowledge, the least offence given to her or her neighbors, by any of his (though he hath learnt it partly by your just abhorring of Uncas his outrageous carriage among you, and of which I have not softly told these messengers and the admired partiality in the case.) For a token of his fidelity to Mrs. Winthrop, Ninigret he prays me to write, that all the women of his town shall present Mrs. Winthrop with a present of corn at Pawcatuck, if she please to send in any conveyance to Pawcatuck for it.

"Sir, to gratify them, I am thus bold with you, and desiring your eternal peace, I rest

"Your worship's unworthy

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"Sir, I formerly wrote to you and now still crave your help with Wequashcook, who keeps basely from me for five or six coats, and can neither get peag nor cloth."

"For his much honored and beloved Mr. John Winthrop, at Nameug.

"*Cawcawmsqussick*, 7, 9, 48.

"Kind Sir,

"Best salutations, &c. I am requested by letter of Captain Atherton, to certify what I can advise about Block-Island, whether it might be had of the natives, for divers of the English (it seems to my conjecture) upon some agitations at the last Court, have thoughts this way. Sir, because God hath pitched your tent these ways, and you know much among the natives of these parts, I judged it not unfit to pray you help me with a word of your information, before I write what otherwise I can, from the barbarians. The counsels of the Most High are deep concerning us poor grasshoppers, hopping and skipping from branch to twig in this vale of tears. Wm. Peacock hath had a very heavy task in carrying Joseph with cattle from you; six or seven days and nights the poor fellow was seeking them (being lost and scattered from Niantick.) Then he brought six to my house, four being finally lost; I took what pains I could to get them sought again, and three I hear are found, after which Wm. Peacock is now out, and I look for him this night with those three; Ninigret did his part honestly, but the youths and boys thereabouts (by some occasion hallooing) the cattle thence took the woods. Joseph Wild hath written to me, and I acquaint him with the cause, that one man alone cannot well drive cattle amongst barbarians, especially without an Indian guide. It were exceeding well that three or four poles were enclosed at Niantick, to keep cattle there at night, for if God vouchsafe peace and plantations (prosperity) there is great needs of it

"Sir, I desire to be your worship's unfeigned,

"ROGER WILLIAMS."

"*Nar.**

"Sir,

"Loving respects to yourself and dearest, and Mrs. Lake, premised. Two days since, Ninigret came to me and requested me to write two letters; the one, in answer to Captain Atherton's motion for some English planting on Block-Island, and on a neck at Niantick; the other, to yourself, in which protesting his innocence as to the death of his son-in-law, with which Uncas and the Pequods charge him. He prays you (as of yourself) to signify (as much as you can) items to the Pequods, that they be quiet and attempt nothing (at least, treacherously,) against him, which he suspects, from words from Uncas, that it will be pleasing to the English. He prays you also to be mindful of endeavoring to remove Wequashcook, so constant a provocation before him; and, at present, he prays you to send for some skins, which lately, as lord of the place, he hath received. I hope the English sachems, as I tell him, in the spring will hear and gratify him in his just desires, the want of which, I guess, is the cause that he is not free, as yet, for Block-Island, &c.; but expresseth much, if the English do him justice against his enemies. Oh, sir, how far from nature is the spirit of Christ Jesus, that loves and pities, prays for and doth good to enemies? Sir, it is like he will request a line of answer, which, if you please to give, I pray, sir, write when either of those ships you write of are for England, and by which you write yourself; also where Mr. Throgmorton is, and whether he desires I should trouble you with the peag of which I wrote, which I propose, if God please, (unless countermanded by either of you) to send immediately upon hearing from you.

"Sir, yours,

"R. W.

"Sir, since I wrote this, it pleased God to send a Dutchman for an old debt, and the same night Mr. Goodyear also, to whom and his wife (for her former husband) I am indebted, and so was necessitated to make satisfaction to Mr. Goodyear also. These providences of God so falling will necessarily cause me to be preparing some few days more

* This letter has no date, nor direction; but it was evidently written to Mr. Winthrop, not long after the preceding letter.

that peag for Mr. Throgmorton. But most certainly it, (God please I live) notwithstanding ways and weather, shall be sent; this I write, that although Mr. Throgmorton should depart, or come home, yet he may presume on your faithfulness and love to dispose of it, as he requesteth.

"Sir, your unworthy,

"R. W.

"Captain Underhill, now here in a Dutch vessel, presents loving respects."

"For the worshipful Mr. John Winthrop, at Nameug, these.*

"Sir,

"Respective salutations to you both, and sister Lake. At this instant (the first of the week, toward noon,) I received yours, and shall be glad, (if God will,) you may gain a seasonable passage by us, before the hardest of winter, although I cannot advise you (but to pray against winter flights and journies,) yet if the necessity of God's providence so cast it, I shall be glad that we might have you prisoner in these parts, yet once in a few days (though in deep snow) here is a beaten path, &c. Sir, Ninigret again importunes me to write to your father and yourself, about his and hunting at Pequod, that you would also be pleased to write to your father. I have endeavored to satisfy him what I can, and shall, yet I am willing at present to write to you, not so much concerning that you can further gratify him at this time, but that I may by this opportunity, salute you with the tidings from the Bay the last night. Skipper Isaack and Moline, are come into the Bay with a Dutch ship, and (as it is said) have brought letters from the States to call home this present Dutch Governor to answer many complaints, both from Dutch and English, against him. In this ship are come English passengers, and they bring word of the great trials it pleaseth the Most High and Only Wise, to exercise both our native England and these parts also.

"The Prince is said to be strong at sea, and among other mischiefs hath taken Mr. Trevice his ship which went from hence, and sent it for France, it seems their rendezvous.

* This letter has no date. It was probably written near the first of December, 1648. It is endorsed, by Mr. Winthrop, "rec'd. Dec'r."

"It is said that after Cromwell had discomfited the Welch, with six thousand, he was forced to encounter nineteen thousand Scots, of whom he took nine hundred prisoners, &c. Great store of Scots and Welch are sent and sold as slaves into other parts. Cromwell wrote to the Parliament that he hoped to be at Edinburgh in a few days. A commission was sent from the Parliament, to try the King in the Isle of Wight, lately prevented from escape.

"The Prince of Orange and the States are falling, if not already fallen, into wars, which makes some of the States to tender Manhattoes, as place of retreat.

"Sir, to Him in whose favor is life, I leave you, desiring in Him to be

"Your worship's unworthy

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"John prays you to be earnest with Mr. Hollet about his house, hoping to be back in a fortnight."

"*Nar.* (*probably towards the close of Dec.* 1648.)

"Sir,

"Best salutations to your worthy self and yours, premised. I am glad for your sake, that it hath pleased God to prevent your winter travel; though I gladly, also, this last week, expected your passage, and being at Providence, hastened purposely to attend you here. Our candle burns out day and night, we need not hasten its end (by swaling) in unnecessary miseries, unless God call us for him to suffer, whose our breath is, and hath promised to such as hate life for him, an eternal. Sir, this last week, I read an ordinance of both houses, (dated third month, May last) decreeing death to some consciences, but imprisonment to far more, ever (upon the point) to all but Presbyterians. We have a sound, that Fairfax and Cromwell are proclaimed traitors, but I rather credit that report, that Cromwell only was sent for by the Parliament, which, it seems, inclines with the king, and the city all against the army. The Earl of Warwick was gone for Holland with twenty-two ships pursuing the Prince. Mr. Foot and others went to Holland, (whither Mr. Trevice his ship was carried) and were offered the ship for two thousand pounds, but I cannot hear of their agreement.

About forty from the Parliament went to the King, to the Isle of Wight, (who was lately and strangely prevented of escape) to treat, but could not agree upon the first, viz. that the King should acknowledge the beginning of the war to be his. Sir, this is the chief of matters told me few days since, by Mr. Throgmorton, who came ten days since from the Bay, and came well in a full laden vessel to anchor by Saconet rocks, but it pleased God his new cable was cut by the rocks, and he drove upon Rhode-Island shore, where it is feared the vessel is spoiled, but (through God's mercy) he saved his goods. Sir, Mr. Brewster, (by letter) requests me to convey three letters and bags of metal to you. I wish they may have worth in them, especially to draw us up to dig into the heavens for true treasure. Sir, (though Mr. Brewster wrote me not word of it) yet in private, I am bold to tell you, that I hear it hath pleased God greatly to afflict him in the thorns of this life. He was intended for Virginia; his creditors in the Bay came to Portsmouth and unhung his rudder, carried him to the Bay, where he was forced to make over all, house, land, cattle, and part with all to his chest. Oh how sweet is a dry morsel and a handful, with quietness from earth and heaven. Sane nescio de quo scribis furti suspecto. John Jones is thought here to be false or faulty. He said he was your servant, that you gave him 10*s.* in peag to bear his charges, which being stolen out of his pocket, he borrowed so much of me here in your name, promising to pay me at his return, being to receive money for you in the Bay; he had, also, 10*s.* more, to buy, for me, two or three necessaries. He took 27*s.* 6*d.* of Valentine, Mr. Smith's man, my neighbor at the trading house, for a drum, which he said he left at my house at Providence, which drum cost him 48*s.*, and he promised to send it by an Indian, but refused, and offered to sell it again at Providence; it is now attached.

"Mr. Brewster requested me to pay the Bay carriers, which I have thus ordered, that six awl blades I pay to a native to carry to Ninigret, and pray you to pay six more to him that brings them to you. I am sorry you had no more corn from Ninigret, yet glad you had so much, for I am forced to pay 4*s.* the bushel for all I spend. Sir, I have not known the like of Indian madness. The Father

of lights cause us to bless him for and with our reason, remembering Nebuchadnezzar.

"Sir, I desire to be yours ever in Christ Jesus,

"ROGER WILLIAMS."

In March, 1648–9, the town of Providence obtained a charter of incorporation from the General Assembly. [See Appendix F.]

CHAPTER XVIII.

Mr. Coddington—letters to John Winthrop—execution of Charles I.

The unhappy dissensions, which arose among the leading men on Rhode-Island, were a source of disquietude to Mr. Williams, and of injury to the whole colony. The fierce controversy then maintained between the King and Parliament, in England, had some share in the difficulties between Mr. Coddington and his friends. Mr. Coddington was attached to the King, and was disposed to uphold his interest in the colony.

The following letter to Mr. Winthrop, which is without date, but which appears, from internal evidence, to have been written about the commencement of the year 1648–9, refers to these dissensions, and displays the pacific temper of Mr. Williams:

"For his much honored, kind friend, Mr. John Winthrop, at his house at Nameug, these.

"*Cawcawmsqussick.*

"Sir,

"Best salutations presented to you both, with humble desires, that, since it pleaseth God to hinder your presence this way, he may please, for his infinite mercy's sake, in his Son's blood, to further our eternal meeting in the presence of him that sits upon the throne, and the Lamb forever; and that the hope thereof may be living, and bring forth the fruits of love where it is possible, and of lamenting for obstructions. Sir, the affairs of our country (Vaderland, as the Dutch speak) would have afforded us much conference. The merciful Lord help us to make up in prayer to his holy majesty, &c. Sir, for this land, our poor colony is in civil dissension. Their last meetings, at which I have not been, have fallen into factions; Mr. Coddington and Captain Partridge, &c. are the heads of the one, and Captain Clarke, Mr. Easton, &c. the heads of the other faction. I receive letters from both, inviting me, &c. but I resolve (if the Lord please) not to engage, unless with great

hopes of peace-making. The peace makers are sons of God. Our neighbors, the Narragansets, are now consulting, and making peag, to carry, within a few weeks, another payment. Sir, about a month since, one William Badger, a seaman, and now a planter at William Field's farm, near Providence, passed by me, travelling to the Seabrook. I have received letters since from Captain Mason, to whom I wrote by him, and hear nothing of him. I fear he miscarried, for he was alone, without a guide. And, since I mention Captain Mason, worthy Sir, I humbly beg of the Father of Lights to guide you, in your converse and neighborhood with him. In his letters to me, he tells me of some extraordinary lifts against Uncas, and that he will favor him, but no more than religion and reason bid him. He promiseth to visit me, in his passage, this summer, eastward, (I guess he means toward Plymouth.) I shall then argue, if God will, many things, and how it stands with religion and reason, that such a monstrous hurry and affrightment should be offered to an English town, either by Indians or English, unpunished. Sir, you have seen many parts of this world's snowball, and never found aught but vanity and vexation. At Nameug shall you find no more, except in the fountain of living waters. Sir, heap coals of fire on Captain Mason's head; conquer evil with good, but be not cowardly, and overcome with any evil.

"If you have by you the Trial of Wits, at convenience, spare it me a few days. However, study, as the Lord commands, your quietness, for which I shall ever pray and endeavor.

"Your worship's unfeigned,
"ROGER WILLIAMS."

Mr. Coddington, having failed in his endeavors to detach the island from the colony, and unite it to Plymouth, resolved to proceed to England, and procure a separate charter for the island. The following letter, dated January 29, 1648–9, mentions his departure, without any allusion to his object, which, perhaps, was not then known:

"For his honored, kind friend, Mr. John Winthrop, at Nameug.

"*Cawcawmsqussick*, 29, 11, 48, (*so called.*)

"Sir,

"Best salutations and wishes to the Father of mercies for

your worthy self, yoke fellow, sister, &c. It must be so in this world's sea. Sicut fluctus fluctum, sic luctus luctum sequitur. And every day hath his sufficiency or fulness of evil to all the children of the first sinful man ; no persons, no places, exempted from the reach of the first curse. My humble desire is to the most righteous and only wise Judge, that the wood of Christ's gallows (as in Moses' act) may be cast into all your and our bitter waters, that they be sweet and wholesome instructers of the fruits of sin, the sorrows of others abroad, (in our England's Aceldama,) our own deservings to feel upon ourselves, bodies and souls, (wives and children also,) not by barbarians, but devils, and that eternally, sorrows inexpressible, inconceivable, and yet, if Christ's religion be true, unavoidable, but by the blood of a Savior, &c. Sir, pardon me, this is not the matter. Sir, your letters I speedily despatched by a messenger on purpose. For a place, I know indeed of one in Plymouth claim, and would specify, but that your spirit being troubled, countermanded it again, in your postscript concerning Elderkin, whom I will, if God will, effectually labor with, and write the issue with speed. All our neighbors, the barbarians, run up and down, and consult; partly suspecting like dealings ; partly ready to fall upon the Mohegans, at your word, and a world of foolish agitations, I could trouble you with, but I told the chiefest yesterday, that it is not our manner to be rash, and that you will be silent till your father and other ancient sachems speak first, &c. Sir, concerning the bags of ore, it is of Rhode-Island, where is certainly affirmed to be both gold and silver ore, upon trial. Mr. Coddington went to the Bay, with his daughter, for England, and left Captain Partridge in trust with all, the last week, at Newport. George Wright, alias Captain Wright, stabbed with a pike, Walter Lettice, at Newport, and is in prison ; the other, if not dead, not like to live.

"Sir, yours ever, in all unfeigned respect, &c.

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"I want wax to seal, otherwise I would have expressed something, which I reserve till another season, if the Lord will."

In March following, Mr. Williams again wrote to Mr.

Winthrop. In this letter, he mentioned, that he had been elected Deputy President, in consequence of the absence of Mr. Coddington.

"For the worshipful, his kind friend, Mr. John Winthrop, at Nameug.

"*Cawcawmsqussick*, 1, 48 (*so called.*)

"Sir,

"Best respects and love presented, and thanks hearty for your letters, former and latter, all now received. I am again importuned by our neighbor sachems, having heard of Wequashcook's carrying of peag to Captain Mason, to pray you to inform them whether that peag be part of the payment; because Wequashcook and his company refuse to pay. They desire me also to write to the Bay about it, which I defer to do until their payments go, which are something delayed because of the death of Ninigret's wife's mother, which is the same you write of, Wequashcook's mother, and it is now qunnantacaun, that is, lamentation. Sir, since I wrote to you, our four towns met by deputies, six out of a town. This Court last week wrote to me information of their choice of myself Deputy President, in the absence of the President, who, whether they have fixed on yourself, or Mr. Coddington's faction prevail to keep his name in, now gone for England, I cannot yet learn, but I have excused myself for some reasons, and I hope they have chosen better. I wrote to them about an act of oblivion, which, blessed be the God of peace, they have past, and have appointed a Court of election in the third month, at Warwick. Sir, I am exceeding glad of your beginnings at Pawcatuck. I pray fail not to inquire whether there, or from Mohegan or Connecticut, you can help me to one hundred bushels of Indian corn. To your dear yokefellow and sister respective salutation. The sun of righteousness graciously shine on you. I desire, unfeignedly, to be your worship's unfeigned in love,

"R. W.

"The sachems pray you to tell them whether their peag will be sold at under rates, as Pumhommin, coming two days since from the Bay, informs them, viz. that they must pay great black at thirteen to the penny, and small black at fifteen, and white eight to the penny. I tell them the

last year it was measured, and so word was sent to me they should pay it by measure."

Another letter, written about this time, will be inserted here. It treats of the usual topic, the rights and interests of the Indians:

"For his honored, kind friend, Mr. John Winthrop, at Pequod.*

"Sir,

"I am the more easily persuaded by this barbarian prince, Ninigret, to trouble you so often, that I may the oftener hear of your welfare, and at present how it pleased God to bring you home to yours again. Upon your word, Ninigret prays you to send him word, whether within ten days of this 5th of the week present, you will please to meet him at Wequatucket, so it be when Mr. Stanton is present. He would confer about Mr. Eliot's letter and coat, about Wequashcook's usurping at Pawcatuck, about his present hunting, about the present disposal of the Pequod fields, about his letters to the Bay, which, in your name, I have almost persuaded to suspend until the meeting of the commissioners at Boston. Here is now a great hurry made by Anquontis, one of those petty sachems, of whom Mr. Eliot wrote to you and me. He hath offered great abuse to one of the chief, and Ninigret is now going to Conanicut about him. I persuade not to engage themselves, but to send him to the Bay with my letter. Sir, loving respects to Mrs. Winthrop, Mrs. Lake, whom God graciously, with your loving self and yours, bind up in the bundle of that life, which is eternal in Christ Jesus, in whom I desire to be,

"Yours ever,

"ROGER WILLIAMS."

The following letter alludes to a narrow escape from death, which Mr. Williams met with, in his passage in a canoe, from Providence to Narraganset. His habitual piety is here exhibited in a manner the more satisfactory, because it is evidently the unstudied emanation of his feelings:

* This letter is without a date. It was, perhaps, written in March or April, 1649.

"For the worshipful Mr. John Winthrop, at Pequod.

"*Narraganset*, 9, 3, 49, (*so called.*)

"Sir,

"Best salutations and wishes presented to your dearest, with yourself, &c. These enclosed came to my hand in two several letters from the Bay enclosed, your brother in a letter from him, requesting my help, &c. I have, therefore, speeded them by the sachems, who will, therefore, expect some word of tidings from the Bay, which you may please to signify, in one line to me. Whatever you hear, or can well collect, will be any word of tidings, &c., by which occasion (if you have occasion) you may well rescribe. Benedict was desired by the magistrates in the Bay to take special care to charge Wequashcook, concerning* . He hath requested this task from me, which this morning I purpose to do (with God's help) carefully. Sir, two days since, my boat not being fitted, coming from Providence, I was (in articulo temporis) snatched by a merciful, and, some say, a miraculous hand, from the jaws of death. The canoe being overset, some goods, to some value, were sunk, some whereof I hope, if God please, to recover. However, blessed be God, and blessed are such whom he correcteth and teacheth in him. Yours he graciously make me, though unworthy.

"ROGER WILLIAMS."

The following letter is worthy of notice, as affording a slight intimation of that deficiency of paper and other articles, which the exclusion from intercourse with Boston occasioned. This letter was written on the envelope, or blank side, of one addressed to the writer, as is evident from the direction, which stood originally thus: "To my much respected friend, Mr. Roger Williams." Mr. Williams struck out his own name, and put in the place of it, "John Winthrop, at Pequod," in a blacker ink.

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* "Concerning." Though the original of this letter is much torn, the blank following the above word is the only one which I was not able satisfactorily to make out or supply. The fragments of a few letters look more like parts of the word "Nenekunat" (Ninigret) than any other. Between that sachem and Wequashcook, as appears from another letter of Roger Williams, there was a misunderstanding. G.

"To my much respected friend, Mr. John Winthrop, at Pequod.

"13, 3, 49, (*so called.*)

"Sir,

"Salutations, &c.

"Your last letter, which you mention, I sent by the way of the English, since I came hither from Providence. I know of no letter of yours, that came back, as you write. One of mine to yourself, when you were in the Bay, was met by the peag messengers from the Bay, and brought by them again to my hand, because, as they conceived, the whole about Uncas, his wounding, was not yet, as then, known, which, at your coming hither, by the English relation, was perfected. Tidings from Uncas are, that the English come from the Bay to Hartford about Uncas, and are appointed to take this way, and to take Ninigret with them. Aquawoce (Wepiteammock) is at the point of death. Expectat nos mors ubique; cur non nos mortem? In life and death the Son of God shine on us. In him,

"Yours I desire to be, ever unfeigned,

"ROGER WILLIAMS."

In May, 1649, the General Court met at Warwick, when Mr. John Smith was chosen President, Mr. Williams having, as it appears declined a re-election. Among the assistants chosen, was Mr. Gorton. Mr. Williams was chosen "to take a view of the records delivered into the Court by Mr. William Dyre," referring, probably, to his complaints against Mr. Coddington. These complaints were again presented to the Court, but were deferred, in consequence, we may suppose, of the absence of Mr. Coddington.

At this Court, a law was made, that if a President should be elected, and should refuse to serve, he should be fined ten pounds, and an assistant, in like circumstances, five pounds. We may infer, from this law, that the men of those times were either too humble to covet the honors, or too poor to sustain the expenses, of office. The want of ambition may, perhaps, be fairly considered, as the chief cause. It would be happy for our country, if a portion of this temper of our ancestors, were inherited by their descendants. The furious struggle for power is one of the most ominous evils in our free republic.

The following letter from Mr. Williams was written a few days after the session of the Court. It is interesting, for several reasons. The excellent regulation, forbidding the sale or gift of spirituous liquors to the natives, except at the discretion of Mr. Williams, shows, at once, the wise and humane policy of the colony towards the natives, and the confidence which they placed in him.

This letter is remarkable, too, for the notice which it contains of the execution of Charles I., who, on the 30th of January preceding, was beheaded at Whitehall, in pursuance of the sentence of his judges. That Charles had forfeited his crown, will scarcely be denied by any man at the present day, unless he be an advocate for arbitrary rule. That the unhappy King did not deserve to die, will now, perhaps, with almost equal unanimity, be maintained, except by those whose political principles bias their judgment, and silence the emotions of their hearts. Of the inexpediency of the execution, the effects are the best proof. The reaction, which was produced in the feelings of the nation, was, doubtless, one of the causes of the restoration, and of the consequent evils. The letter was endorsed by Mr. Winthrop, "Mr. Williams, of the high news about the King."

"For his honored, kind friend, Mr. John Winthrop, at Nameug, these.

"*Nar.* 26, 3, 49, *(so called.)*

"Sir,

"Loving respects to your dear self, and dearest, &c. This last of the week, in the morning, your man and all his charge are come just now to me in safety. I, myself, also came hither late last night, and wet, from Warwick, where this colony met, and upon discharge of my service, we chose Mr. Joseph Smith, of Warwick, (the merchant or shop-keeper that lived at Boston) for this year, President. Some were bold (though Capt. Clarke was gone to the Bay and absent) to use your name, and generally applauded and earnestly desired, in case of any possible stretching our bounds to you, or your drawing near to us, though but to Pawcatuck. One law passed, that the natives should no longer abuse us, but that their black should go with us, as with themselves, at four per penny. All wines and strong waters forbidden the natives throughout the colony, only a

privilege betrusted in my hand, to spare a little for necessities, &c.

"Sir, tidings are high from England; many ships from many parts say, and a Bristol ship, come to the Isle of Shoals within a few days, confirms, that the King and many great Lords and Parliament men are beheaded. London was shut up on the day of execution, not a door to be opened, &c. The States of Holland and the Prince of Orange (forced by them) consented to proceedings. It is said Mr. Peters preached (after the fashion of England) the funeral sermon to the King, after sentence, out of the terrible denunciation to the King of Babylon. Esa. 14: 18, &c.

"Your letter to your brother I delivered to Mr. Gold, (going to Boston;) this weather, I presume, hinders. Mr. Andrews, a gentleman of Warwick, told me, that he came from the Bay, where he heard that the Bay had proclaimed war with the Narragansets. I hope it is but mistaken; and yet all under, and while we are under the sun, nothing but vanity and vexation.

"The most glorious Sun of Righteousness shine graciously on us. In him I desire to be, Sir, ever yours,

"ROGER WILLIAMS."

The following letter is, on many accounts, honorable to Mr. Williams. It needs no comment:

"*Cawcawmsqussick*, 13, 4, 49, *(so called.)*

"Sir,

"Best salutations, &c. The last night one of Wequashcook's Pequods brought me, very privately, letters from Capt. Mason, (and, as he said, from Uncas and Wequashcook.) The letters are kind to myself. acknowledging loving letters (and tokens, which, upon the burning of his house,) he had received from me, &c.; but terrible to all these natives, especially to the sachems, and most of all, to Ninigret. The purport of the letters and concurrence of circumstances, seem to me to imply some present conclusions (from Connecticut) of hostility, and I question whether or no present and speedy, before the meeting of commissioners, which I saw lately from the Court, under Mr. Nowell's hand, was not to be till the 7th month. The

murdering of Uncas is alleged by stabbing, and since attempted by witches, &c. The conclusion is therefore ruin. The words of the letter are: 'If nothing but blood will satisfy them, I doubt not but they may have their fill; and again, I perceive such an obstinate wilfulness, joined with desperate malicious practices, that I think and believe *they are sealed to destruction.*' Sir, there are many devices in a man's heart, but the counsel of Jehovah shall stand. If he have a holy and righteous purpose to make us drink of our mother's cup, the holiness, nor power, nor policy of New-England, can stop his hand: He be pleased to prevent it, if not to sweeten it.

"Sir, I pray, if you have aught, signify in a line, and you shall not fail of my poor papers and prayers.

"Your unfeigned,

"R. W.

"Your letters and friends were here some days with me. This last choice at Warwick (according to my soul's wish and endeavor) hath given me rest. Others are chosen, Mr. John Clarke, at Newport, to whom, and all my friends on the island, I wrote effectually. Thither they went. I have heard nothing since. If power had been with me, such a work of mercy, (although to strangers) I hope, by the Lord's assistance, shall not escape me; and I have promised my assistance to Mr. Clarke and others, at Newport, if any blame or damage befal them from the colony or elsewhere.

"Sir, I forgot to thank you for the pamphlets, although (not having been lately at Providence) I have them not; but I have sent for them. I have here now with me my eldest daughter, of seventeen. Her younger sister, of fifteen, hath had nature's course before her, which she wanting, a flux of rheum hath much affected her head and right eye; she hath taken much physic, and been let blood, but yet no change. She is advised by some to the Bay. I pray advise me to whom you judge fittest to address unto of the Bay physicians.

"Sir, I hear a smith of your town hath left you, and saith I sent for him. It is most untrue, though we want one at Providence, yet I should condemn in myself, or any, to invite any convenience or commodity from our friends. I know him not, nor ever spake (to my knowledge) about

him. Mr. Throgmorton hath lately brought in some corn from Hemstead and those parts, but extraordinary dear. I pay him 6*s*. for Indian, and 8*s*. for wheat. These rains, if God please to give peace, promise hopes of plenty.

"Two days since, letters from my brother. He saith a ship was come to the Bay from England. She was not come yet in the river. A lighter went aboard, and brought the confirmation of the King's death, but no other particulars. The everlasting King of kings shine on us, &c."

CHAPTER XIX.

Warwick—Mr. Williams' compensation—imprisonment of John Clarke and Obadiah Holmes—Mr. Coddington's separate charter—Mr. Williams and Mr. Clarke prepare to go to England.

It has been seen, that although Warwick was not named in the charter, yet that settlement, having obtained from England the sanction of the commissioners, had joined with the other towns, in forming a civil government. But a portion of the inhabitants of Pawtuxet, having submitted themselves to the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, refused to acknowledge the authority of the charter. At the General Assembly, at Warwick, in May, 1649, it was "ordered, that a messenger be sent to Pomham and the other sachem, to require them to come to this Court; and that letters be sent to Benedict Arnold and his father, and the rest of Pawtuxet, about their subjecting to this colony." They persisted in their refusal; and, although the territory was undeniably included in the charter obtained by Mr. Williams, yet these inhabitants of Pawtuxet and its vicinity continued for several years to resist the authority of the General Assembly of Rhode-Island, and caused much annoyance to the colony. In this conduct, they were upheld by the government of Massachusetts. In 1650, as we are informed by Mr. Backus,* "William Arnold and William Carpenter, instead of submitting to the government of their own colony, went again and entered complaints against some of their neighbors to the Massachusetts rulers, and they sent a citation to some of them to come and answer the same in their courts, dated from Boston, June 20, 1650, signed by Edward Rawson, Secretary."†

There seems to have been much disinclination to pay the sum voted to Mr. Williams for his services in procuring the charter. At the General Assembly, in May, 1650, three years after the grant, it was found necessary to send

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* Vol. i. p. 207. † Providence Records.

a fresh order to the towns to collect and pay the sums due, within twenty days. This order was not entirely successful, and it is nearly certain, that the whole amount was never paid. It is probable, that few disputed the justice of the grant, and we may hope, that the unhappy jealousies which subsisted between individuals, and some of the towns, together with the poverty of the inhabitants, rather than a deliberate disregard of Mr. Williams' just claims, were the causes of the failure. But gratitude has not been the most conspicuous virtue, either of kings or of republics. The patriotic Winthrop spent his large estate, and his life, in the service of Massachusetts; yet was he compelled to submit to an impeachment, from which, however, he issued with a purer fame. It is a lamentable fact, that men are often imboldened to do, in concert, what they would not venture to do, in their individual capacity. They seem to think, that they lose their identity in a crowd, and that guilt, in which many share, becomes so divided and attenuated, as to leave a very insignificant portion to each person. Human passions, too, are contagious, and a large assembly sometimes inflame each other to the perpetration of deeds, of which each man would, when alone, have been ashamed.

The memorable transactions in Massachusetts, in which the Rev. John Clarke, Mr. Obadiah Holmes and Mr. John Crandall* had so melancholy a share, deserve a notice. They show the rigor, with which the famous law of 1644, levelled ostensibly against anabaptists, was executed; and the special aversion which was felt towards intruders from Rhode-Island.

In July, 1651, these gentlemen were deputed by the Baptist church in Newport, to visit William Witter, an aged member of that church, who resided at Lynn, a few miles east of Boston. Mr. Witter was an old man, and being unable to visit the church, he had requested an interview with some of his brethren. On this most Christian and in-

* Rev. Mr. Clarke was the founder and pastor of the first Baptist church in Newport. Mr. Holmes was, a short time before these transactions, presented by a grand jury to the General Court at Plymouth, because he and a few others had set up a Baptist meeting in Seekonk. He removed to Newport, and after Dr. Clarke's death, was his successor, as Pastor. He had, at the time he was imprisoned and whipped, a wife and eight children.

offensive errand, the committee proceeded to Lynn. Their aged brother resided about two miles from the town, and the next day being the Sabbath, it was thought proper to spend it in religious worship at his house. Mr. Clarke preached from Rev. 3: 10. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." In the midst of his sermon, he was interrupted by two constables. Mr. Clarke thus describes the scene:

"While in conscience towards God, and good will unto his saints, I was imparting to my companions in the house where I lodged, and to four or five strangers that came in unexpected after I had begun, opening and proving what is meant by the hour of temptation, what by the word of his patience, and their keeping it, and how he that hath the key of David (being the promiser) will keep those who keep the word of his patience, from the hour of temptation. While, I say, I was yet speaking, there came into the house where we were, two constables, who, with their clamorous tongues, made an interruption in my discourse, and more uncivilly disturbed us than the pursuivants of the old English bishops were wont to do, telling us that they were come with authority from the magistrate to apprehend us. I then desired to see the authority by which they thus proceeded, whereupon they plucked forth their warrant, and one of them, with a trembling hand, (as conscious he might have been better employed) read it to us; the substance whereof was as followeth:

'By virtue hereof, you are required to go to the house of William Witter, and so to search from house to house, for certain erroneous persons, being strangers, and them to apprehend, and in safe custody to keep, and to-morrow morning, at eight o'clock, to bring before me.

'ROBERT BRIDGES.' "*

The constables carried Mr. Clarke and his companions to the Congregational meeting, where they were compelled to stay till the service was closed. Mr. Clarke then rose and addressed the assembly, but was speedily silenced, and the next day, the three heretics were committed to prison in

* Backus, vol. i. p. 215.

Boston. A few days afterwards, they were tried, before the Court of Assistants, and Mr. Clarke was sentenced to pay a fine of twenty pounds, Mr. Holmes thirty pounds, and Mr. Crandall five pounds; or, in default of payment, each was to be whipped. They refused to pay the fine, for the plain reason, that the payment of a fine is an acknowledgment of guilt, of which they felt themselves to be innocent. They were accordingly committed to prison.

On the trial, Mr. Clarke defended himself and his companions so ably, that the Court were somewhat embarrassed. "At length, (says Mr. Clarke) the Governor stepped up and told us we had denied infant baptism, and being somewhat transported, told me I had deserved death, and said he would not have such trash brought into their jurisdiction. Moreover he said, 'you go up and down, and secretly insinuate into those that are weak, but you cannot maintain it before our ministers. You may try and dispute with them.' To this I had much to reply, but he commanded the jailer to take us away."*

From the prison, Mr. Clarke sent to the Court a proposition to meet with any of the ministers, and hold a public discussion. This proposal was at first accepted, and a day was fixed. But the clergy probably thought, that a public debate about infant baptism, with so able an antagonist, would be inexpedient. Mr. Clarke's fine was accordingly paid, without his knowledge or consent, and he was released from prison. He was anxious for an opportunity to maintain, publicly, his opinions, and to vindicate his innocence. But he could not succeed in bringing his opponents to the trial of argument. Leaving, therefore, with the magistrates a declaration, that he would be ready, at any time, to visit Boston, and maintain his sentiments, he, together with Mr. Crandall, who was released on condition of appearing at the next Court, returned to Newport.

The two following letters from Mr. Williams to Mr. Winthrop, were written about this time, probably in August, 1651:

"Sir,

"Loving respects to you both, with Mrs. Lake and yours. By this opportunity I am bold to inform you, that from the

* Benedict, vol. i. p. 367.

Bay I hear of the sentence on Mr. Clarke, to be whipt or pay twenty pounds, Obadiah Holmes whipt or thirty pounds, on John Crandall, whipt or five pounds. This bearer hears of no payment nor execution, but rather a demur, and some kind of conference. The Father of Lights graciously guide them and us in such paths; for other succor than that (in his mouth) Christ Jesus walks not among the churches, (Rev. 1.) Sir, upon those provocations that lately (as in my last I hinted) Auguontis gave the sachems, Ninigret, Pitammock and Pesiccosh, went in person to their town, (Chaubutick) and upon Pummakommins telling the sachems that he was as great a sachem as they, they all fell together by the ears; yet no blood spilt. The Chaubatick Indians send to the Bay; they say Auguontis is sent for and Ninigret, but I know no certain other than messengers passing to and again from Chaubatick to the Bay. Here was last week Mr. Sellick, of Boston, and Mr. Gardiner, a young merchant, to fetch my corn, and more, from Mr. Paine, of Seekonk; they are bound to the French, unless diverted. They tell me of a ship of 300, come from Barbadoes. Mr. Wall, the master, stood upon his guard while he staid there; he brought some passengers, former inhabitants from London, whose case was sad there, because of the posture of the island (where, as I have by letter from a godly friend there) they force all to swear to religion and laws. This Mr. Wall hath a new and great design, viz. from hence to the East Indies. The frigates designed for Barbadoes were ordered for Scilly, which they assaulted, and took forts and ordnance and frigates, and drove the Governor into his last fort. It hath pleased God to bring your ancient acquaintance and mine, Mr. Coddington, in Mr. Carwithy his ship of 500; he is made Governor of this colony for his life. General Cromwell was not wounded nor defeated, (as is said) but sick of flux and fever, and mending, and had a victory over the Scots. Sir, this world passeth away and the (σχημα) fashion, shape and form of it, only the word of Jehovah remains. That word literal is sweet, as it is the field where the mystical word or treasure, Christ Jesus, lies hid.

"In Him I hope to be

"Yours, R. W.

"Sir, to Mr. Blindman loving salutations."

"For his honored, kind friend, Mr. John Winthrop, at Pequod.

"Sir,

"Loving respects, &c. Yours received and the 10*s.* from your neighbor Elderkin, and letters, which shall carefully be sent. I came from Providence last night, and was able, by God's merciful providence, so to order it, that I was their pilot to my house here, from whence I have provided a native, who, with Joseph Fosseker, I hope will bring them safe to you. The merciful Lord help you and me to say, as Solomon, all that comes is vanity: all cattle, all goods, all friends, all children, &c. I met Mr. John Clarke, at Providence, *recens e carcere*. There was great hammering about the disputation, but they could not hit, and although (my much lamented friend) the Governor told him, that he was worthy to be hanged, &c. yet he was as good as thrust out without pay or whipping, &c.; but Obadiah Holmes remains. Mr. Carwithy is gone with his ship to the eastward for masts, and returns, three weeks hence, to set sail for England. Sir, I have a great suit to you, that at your leisure you would fit and send something that you find suitable to these Indian bodies, in way of purge or vomit; as, also, some drawing plaster, and if the charge rise to one or two crowns, I shall thankfully send it; and commending you and yours to the only great and good Physician,* desire, Sir, to be ever

"Yours in Him, R. W."

Mr. Holmes was confined in prison till September, when thirty stripes were inflicted on him, with such merciless severity, that he could not, for a considerable time, take any rest, except by supporting himself with his knees and elbows. Two individuals (John Spur and John Hazel,†) were imprisoned and fined for the grievous offence of exhibiting some sympathy for the sufferer. Mr. Holmes was released, but he continued in Massachusetts, and baptized

* Mr. Winthrop had considerable skill in medicine. The benevolent zeal of Mr. Williams for the welfare of the Indians, shows itself on all occasions.

† Mr. Hazel was an old man of threescore years. He was one of Mr. Holmes' brethren, from Seekonk, and had travelled fifty miles to visit him in prison. The old man died before he reached home.

several individuals. Warrants were again issued to apprehend him, and he returned home to his family.

The recital of these transactions is painful, but we must compel ourselves to contemplate such scenes, if we would suitably feel the contrast between the policy of Massachusetts, at that day, and the tolerant principles of Roger Williams. To that policy must it be ascribed, that wise and good men could thus treat their fellow Christians. It is pleasing to know, however, that this conduct was not unanimously approved, by those who were free from all suspicion of anabaptism. Sir Richard Saltonstall, one of the magistrates of Massachusetts, then in England, wrote thus to Messrs. Cotton and Wilson:

"Reverend and dear friends, whom I unfeignedly love and respect:

"It doth not a little grieve my spirit, to hear what sad things are reported daily of your tyranny and persecutions in New-England, as that you fine, whip and imprison men for their consciences. First, you compel such to come into your assemblies as you know will not join you in your worship, and when they show their dislike thereof, or witness against it, then you stir up your magistrates to punish them for such (as you conceive) their public affronts. Truly, friends, this your practice of compelling any in matters of worship, to do that whereof they are not fully persuaded, is to make them sin, for so the apostle (Rom. 14: 23) tells us, and many are made hypocrites thereby, conforming in their outward man, for fear of punishment. We pray for you, and wish you prosperity every way, hoping the Lord would have given you so much light and love there, that you might have been eyes to God's people here, and not to practise those courses in a wilderness, which you went so far to prevent. These rigid ways have laid you very low in the hearts of the saints."

Mr. Cotton replied to this letter. After stating that Mr. Clarke and Mr. Holmes had offended against the "order and government of our churches, established, *we know*, by God's law," he furnishes this remarkable specimen of sophistry: "You think, to compel men in matters of worship is to make them sin. If the worship be lawful in itself, the magistrate compelling him to come to it compelleth

him not to sin, but the sin is in his will that needs to be compelled to a Christian duty. If it do make men hypocrites, yet better be hypocrites than profane persons. Hypocrites give God part of his dues, the outward man; but the profane person giveth God neither outward nor inward man. You know not, if you think we came into this wilderness, to practise those courses here, which we fled from in England. We believe there is a vast difference between men's inventions and God's institutions. We fled from men's inventions, to which we else should have been compelled. We compel none to men's inventions. If our ways (rigid ways, as you call them,) have laid us low in the hearts of God's people, yea, and of the saints, (as you style them) we do not believe it is any part of their saintship. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, we have tolerated in our churches some anabaptists, some antinomians, and some seekers, and do so still, at this day. We are far from arrogating infallibility of judgment to ourselves, or affecting uniformity. Uniformity God never required; infallibility he never granted us."*

There is, in this reply, somewhat more of asperity than Mr. Cotton's writings usually exhibit. It is easy to perceive, that the good man's spirit was chafed by the rebuke from one of his own friends. Nothing tries a man's temper more than reproof, when he is secretly convinced that he has done wrong, and is yet unprepared to acknowledge it. It is a sore task to defend himself, when his conscience is on the side of the accuser. In such a case, a man is apt to resort to confident and emphatic assertions, rather than to calm arguments.

We have mentioned Mr. Coddington's visit to England, for the purpose of procuring a charter for the islands of Rhode-Island, Canonicut, &c. He procured from the Council of State, which then wielded the executive power in England,† a commission, dated April 3, 1651, and

* Benedict, vol. i. p. 377.

† Mr. Neal (vol. iv. ch. 1) says, that after the death of Charles I. the House of Commons assumed the government, "the House of Lords was voted useless, and the office of a king unnecessary, burdensome and dangerous. The form of government for the future was declared to be a free commonwealth, the executive power lodged in the hands of a Council of State of forty persons, with full power

signed by John Bradshaw, constituting Mr. Coddington governor of the islands, and empowering him to rule them, with a council of six men, nominated by the people, and approved by himself.

Mr. Coddington returned about the first of August, 1651. His new charter at once subverted the existing government, by severing the islands from the other towns. Much agitation of feeling naturally ensued. Those inhabitants of the islands, who were opposed to Mr. Coddington's measures, were alarmed at finding themselves thus subjected to his power. The towns of Warwick and Providence were annoyed by the inhabitants of Pawtuxet, consisting of whites and Indians, who rejected the government of Rhode-Island, and adhered to that of Massachusetts. The Indians committed many depredations, and offered many insults, which neither the General Assembly of

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to take care of the whole administration for one year. New keepers of the great seal were appointed, from whom the judges received their commissions. The oaths of allegiance and supremacy were abolished, and a new one appointed, called the *engagement*, which was, to be true and faithful to the government established, without King or House of Peers."

As great a change took place in ecclesiastical affairs. Episcopacy was abolished, by law, in 1646; a Directory was substituted for the Liturgy, a large part of the livings were distributed among the Presbyterian clergy, and finally, in 1649, Presbyterianism was declared, by act of Parliament, to be the established religion. The Presbyterians were fully as tenacious of the *divine right* of their polity as the Episcopalians were of theirs; and Dissenters were treated with nearly as much rigor under the Presbyterian rule, as they were by the Prelates. The Presbyterians refused to grant toleration to the Independents, and insisted on their submission. A number of the Presbyterian ministers and elders in London published a piece, in 1649, "in which they represent the doctrine of universal toleration as contrary to godliness, opening a door to libertinism and profaneness, and a tenet to be rejected as a soul poison." The ministers of Lancashire published a paper, in 1648, in which they remonstrated against toleration, "as putting a cup of poison into the hands of a child, and a sword into that of a madman; as letting loose madmen, with firebrands in their hands, and appointing a city of refuge in men's consciences for the devil to fly to; and instead of providing for tender consciences, taking away all conscience." Neal, vol. iii. p. 313. The Presbyterians might well dislike Cromwell, who curbed their intolerant spirit. They had time for reflection, when, at the restoration, the Episcopal clergy expelled thousands of them from their livings, and treated them as they had treated their Independent brethren.

Rhode-Island, nor the towns of Providence and Warwick, could either prevent or punish. The government of Massachusetts, and the commissioners of the united colonies, refused to remedy these evils, unless Warwick would submit to the jurisdiction of Plymouth or Massachusetts, and finally the commissioners advised the Plymouth colony to take possession of Warwick by force, if necessary.

In this distressed state of the colony, the separation occasioned by Mr. Coddington's measures would have been ruinous. The only remedy was an immediate application to the government in England, for the repeal of Mr. Coddington's charter, and the confirmation of that obtained by Mr. Williams. For this purpose, Mr. John Clarke was requested by citizens of Newport and Portsmouth* to proceed to England, as their agent. The towns of Providence and Warwick urgently importuned Mr. Williams to accompany Mr. Clarke on this important business. He consented, though with reluctance, arising from a natural unwillingness to leave his large family, (now consisting of a wife and six children) and partly, we presume, from inability to sustain the expense. He had not been remunerated for his former agency, and he was now, it seems, obliged, in order to raise funds, to sell his house at Narraganset,† notwithstanding that some efforts were made by the people of Providence and Warwick to obtain a sufficient sum by subscription. These facts we learn from the following letter to Mr. Winthrop, and from a letter which will next be quoted from William Arnold:

"For my honored, kind friend, Mr. John Winthrop, at Pequod.

"*Nar.* 6, 8, 51, (*so called.*)

"Sir,

"Once more my loving and dear respects presented to

* The application was signed by sixty-five inhabitants of Newport, who are said to have been, at that time, almost all the free male inhabitants. Forty-one of the inhabitants of Portsmouth signed a like request. Backus, vol. i. p. 274. These facts imply, that Mr. Coddington's party was not very large, and that his conduct was unjustifiable.

† In a letter, written in 1677, he says, that "he gave up his trading house at Narraganset, when he last went to England, with one hundred pounds profit per annum."

you both, and Mrs. Lake. Being now bound, resolvedly, (if the Lord please) for our native country, I am not certain whether by the way of the English, (you know the reason*) or by the way of the Dutch. My neighbors of Providence and Warwick, (whom I also lately denied) with importunities, have overcome me to endeavor the renewing of their liberties, upon the occasion of Mr. Coddington's late grant. Upon this occasion, I have been advised to sell, and have sold this house to Mr. Smith, my neighbor, who also may possibly be yours, for I hear he is like to have Mrs. Chester.

"Sir, I humbly thank you for all your loving-kindnesses to me and mine unworthy. The Father of Mercies graciously reward you, guide you, preserve you, save, sanctify and glorify you in the blood of his dear Son, in whom I mourn I am no more, and desire to be yours, unfeignedly and eternally,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"This bearer, coming now from England, will acquaint you, &c.

"To all yours, and all my friends, my loving salutations. Mr. Sands, of Boston, and John Hazel, of Seekonk, are gone before us."

Information of these designs was immediately communicated by William Arnold to the Governor of Massachusetts. The following letter, preserved in Hutchinson's Collection, is worthy of perusal, both from its connection with Mr. Williams, and from the light which it throws on the state of the times. Mr. Arnold, it will be seen, was not disposed to look on any of the proceedings of Rhode-Island with a favorable eye; and hence he accuses its inhabitants of hostility to the united colonies, though facts do not seem to sustain the charge, unless hostility was indicated by a patient endurance of wrong, and by generous services in time of danger.

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* This reason was, his banishment from Massachusetts. There was much delicacy in thus slightly referring to a measure, in which Mr. Winthrop's father was, from his official relations, concerned.

Copy of a letter from Mr. William Arnold to the Governor of Massachusetts:

"*From Pawtuxet, this 1st day of the 7th month*, 1651.

"Much honored,

"I thought it my duty to give intelligence unto the much honored Court, of that which I understand is now working here in these parts; so that if it be the will of God, an evil may be prevented, before it come to too great a head, viz:

"Whereas Mr. Coddington has gotten a charter of Rhode-Island and Canonicut Island to himself, he has thereby broken the force of their charter, that went under the name of Providence, because he has gotten away the greater part of that colony.

"Now these company of the Gortonists, that live at Shawomet, and that company of Providence, are gathering of £200, to send Mr. Roger Williams unto the Parliament, to get them a charter of these parts, they of Shawomet have given £100 already, and there be some men of Providence that have given £10 and £20 a man, to help it forward with speed; they say here is a fair inlet, and I hear they have said, that if the Parliament do take displeasure against Massachusetts, or the rest of the colonies, as they have done against Barbadoes and other places, then this will serve for an inroad to let in forces to overrun the whole country.

"It is great pity, and very unfit, that such a company as these are, they all stand professed enemies against all the united colonies, that they should get a charter for so small a quantity of land as lieth in and about Providence, Shawomet, Pawtuxet, and Coweset, all which, now Rhode-Island is taken out from it, is but a strip of land lying in between the colonies of Massachusetts, Plymouth and Connecticut, by which means, if they should get them a charter, of it there may come some mischief and trouble upon the whole country, if their project be not prevented in time, for under the pretence of liberty of conscience, about these parts, there comes to live all the scum, the runaways of the country, which, in time, for want of better order, may bring a heavy burthen upon the land, &c. This I humbly commend unto the serious consideration of the much honored Court, and rest your humble servant to command,

"WILLIAM ARNOLD.

"They are making haste to send Mr. Williams away. We that live here near them, and do know the place and hear their words, and do take notice of their proceeding, do know more and can speak more of what may come to the country by their means, than the Court do yet consider of. We humbly desire God their purpose may be frustrated, for the country's peace.

"I humbly desire my name may be concealed, lest they, hearing of what I have herein written, they will be enraged against me, and so will revenge themselves upon me.

"Some of them of Shawomet that crieth out much against them which putteth people to death for witches; for, say they, there be no other witches upon earth, nor devils, but your own pastors and ministers, and such as they are, &c.

"I understand that there liveth a man amongst them that broke prison, either at Connecticut or New-Haven; he was apprehended for adultery; the woman, I hear, was put to death, but the man is kept here in safety, in the midst of the united colonies. It is time there were some better order taken for these parts, &c.

"I have hired this messenger on purpose. I humbly desire to hear if this letter come safe to your hands."

The town of Warwick addressed to the commissioners, who met at New-Haven, September 4, 1651, a letter,* in which they unfolded the real condition of the town, and announced, with calm dignity, their design to appeal to the government of England. Mr. Arnold had written, in haste, as if some secret plot had been fomented; but the town thus gave seasonable notice to the commissioners, in order that the other colonies might adopt measures, if they pleased, to oppose and defeat this new embassy to England. The inhabitants of Warwick felt a confidence in the justice of their claims, and feared no opposition.

This letter occasioned much debate among the commissioners. Those of Massachusetts alleged, that Plymouth had resigned to Massachusetts all its pretensions to War-

* Backus, vol. i. p. 272.

wick, while the commissioners of Plymouth denied that such a relinquishment had been made, and protested against the proceedings of Massachusetts, in relation to Warwick. This disagreement among themselves may be received as one of the proofs, that neither party had any just claims.

CHAPTER XX.

Mr. Williams and Mr. Clarke sail—Mr. Coddington's charter vacated—troubles in Rhode-Island—Mr. Williams returns—Sir Henry Vane—Milton—Mr. Williams endeavors to re-establish order—Indians—letter on religious and civil liberty.

Mr. Williams and Mr. Clarke sailed from Boston for England, in November, 1651. It was not without considerable difficulty that Mr. Williams was allowed to take passage at Boston. The object of his mission was offensive to Massachusetts, besides the old dislike of his principles.

During their absence, the towns of Newport and Portsmouth submitted quietly to Mr. Coddington's rule. Providence and Warwick resolved to maintain the government, as before established. They accordingly met by their deputies, in General Assembly, at Providence, elected a Governor, and enacted several laws, one of which prohibited any person from purchasing land of the Indians, without the approbation of the Assembly, on penalty of forfeiting the same to the colony.

Mr. Williams and Mr. Clarke, on their arrival in England, presented a petition to the Council of State, who, on April 8, 1652, referred it to the committee for foreign affairs. The application met with opposition, from various sources; but the Council of State granted an order to vacate Mr. Coddington's commission, and to confirm the former charter.

While in England, in 1652, Mr. Clarke published a book, entitled "Ill News from New-England, or a Narrative of New-England's Persecutions; wherein it is declared, that while Old England is becoming New, New-England is becoming Old; also, Four Proposals to Parliament, and Four Conclusions, touching the Faith and Order of the Gospel of Christ, out of his Last Will and Testament."

Mr. Williams also published, in 1652, his rejoinder to Mr. Cotton, entitled "The Bloody Tenet yet More Bloody, by Mr. Cotton's Endeavor to Wash it White;" and two essays, the one entitled "The Hireling Ministry None of

Christ's, or a Discourse on the Propagation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ;" and the other, "Experiments of Spiritual Life and Health, and their Preservatives."

The following letter was written to Mr. Gregory Dexter, who had printed Mr. Williams' "Key," during his first visit to England, but who had subsequently removed to Providence.

"At Mr. Davis his house, at the Checker, in St. Martin's, or at Sir Henry Vane's, at Whitehall.

"8*th*, 7, 52, (*so called.*)

"My dear and faithful friend, to whom, with the dearest, I humbly wish more and more of the light and love of him who is invisible, God blessed for evermore in the face of Jesus Christ. It hath pleased God so to engage me in divers skirmishes against the priests, both of Old and New-England, so that I have occasioned using the help of printer men, unknown to me, to long for my old friend. So it hath pleased God to hold open an open desire of preaching and printing wonderfully against Romish and English will-worship. At this present, the devil rageth and clamors in petitions and remonstrances from the stationers and others to the Parliament, and all cry, 'shut up the press.' The stationers and others have put forth 'The Beacon Fired,' and 'The Second Beacon Fired;' and some friends of yours have put forth 'The Beacon Quenched,' not yet extant.

"Sir, many friends have frequently, with much love, inquired after you. Mr. Warner is not yet come with my letters: they put into Barnstable. She came by wagon by land, but he goes with the ship to Bristol, and, indeed, in this dangerous war with the Dutch, the only safe trading is to Bristol, or those parts, for up along the channel, in London way, is the greatest danger, for although our fleets be abroad, and take many French and Dutch, yet they sometimes catch up some of ours.

"By my public letters, you will see how we wrestle, and how we are like yet to wrestle, in the hopes of an end. Praised be the Lord, we are preserved, the nation is preserved, the Parliament sits, God's people are secure, too secure. A great opinion is, that the kingdom of Christ is risen, and (Rev. 11:) 'the kingdoms of the earth are be-

come the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.' Others have fear of the slaughter of the witnesses yet approaching. Divers friends, of all sorts, here, long to see you, and wonder you come not over. For myself, I had hopes to have got away by this ship, but I see now the mind of the Lord to hold me here one year longer. It is God's mercy, his very great mercy, that we have obtained this interim encouragement from the Council of State, that you may cheerfully go on in the name of a colony, until the controversy is determined. The determination of it, Sir, I fear, will be a work of time, I fear longer than we have yet been here, for our adversaries threaten to make a last appeal to the Parliament, in case we get the day before the Council.

"Sir, in this regard, and when my public business is over, I am resolved to begin my old law-suit, so that I have no thought of return until spring come twelve months. My duty and affection hath compelled me to acquaint my poor companion with it. I consider our many children, the danger of the seas, and enemies, and therefore I write not positively for her, only I acquaint her with our affairs. I tell her, joyful I should be of her being here with me, until our state affairs were ended, and I freely leave her to wait upon the Lord for direction, and according as she finds her spirit free and cheerful, to come or stay. If it please the Lord to give her a free spirit to cast herself upon the Lord, I doubt not of your love and faithful care, in any thing she hath occasion to use your help, concerning our children and affairs, during our absence; but I conclude, whom have I in heaven or earth but thee, and so humbly and thankfully say, in the Lord's pleasure, as only and infinitely best and sweetest.

"Abundance of love remembered from abundance of friends to your dear self and your dearest.

"My love to your cousin Clemence, and all desire love, especially our godly friends.

"To my dear and faithful friend, Mr. Gregory Dexter, at Providence, in New-England, these."

The General Assembly, which met at Providence, in October, addressed the following letter to Mr. Williams. It is valuable, as a public testimonial of the affection of his fellow-citizens. The proposition to procure for himself,

from the government of England, an appointment as Governor of the colony for one year, is a strong proof of their respect and confidence, though this proposition was protested against by some of them. Mr. Williams, we presume, did not covet this distinction, and probably considered such an appointment as a dangerous precedent, and a virtual relinquishment of the authority given to the colony by the charter to elect its own officers.

"Honored Sir,

"We may not neglect any opportunity to salute you in this your absence, and have not a little cause to bless God, who hath pleased to select you to such a purpose, as we doubt not but will conduce to the peace and safety of us all, as to make you once more an instrument to impart and disclose our cause unto those noble and grave senators, our honorable protectors, in whose eyes God hath given you honor, (as we understand) beyond our hopes, and moved the hearts of the wise to stir on your behalf. We give you hearty thanks for your care and diligence, to watch all opportunities to promote our peace, for we perceive your prudent and comprehensive mind stirreth every stone to present it to the builders, to make firm the fabric unto us, about which you are employed, laboring to unweave such irregular devices wrought by others amongst us, as have formerly clothed us with so sad events, as the subjection of some among us, both English and Indian, to other jurisdictions, as also to prevent such near approach of our neighbors upon our borders, on the Narraganset side, which might much annoy us, with your endeavors to furnish us with such ammunition as to look a foreign enemy in the face, being that the cruel begin to stir in these western parts, and to unite in one again such as of late have had seeming separation in some respects, to encourage and strengthen our weak and enfeebled body to perform its work in these foreign parts, to the honor of such as take care, have been and are so tender of our good, though we be unworthy to be had in remembrance by persons of so noble places, indued with parts of so excellent and honorable and abundantly beneficial use.

"Sir, give us leave to intimate thus much, that we humbly conceive (so far as we are able to understand) that if

it be the pleasure of our protectors to renew our charter for the re-establishing of our government, that it might tend much to the weighing of men's minds, and subjecting of persons who have been refractory, to yield themselves over as unto a settled government, if it might be the pleasure of that honorable state, to invest, appoint, and empower yourself to come over as Governor of this colony, for the space of one year, and so the government to be honorably put upon this place, which might seem to add weight forever hereafter in the constant and successive derivation of the same. We only present it to your deliberate thoughts and consideration, with our hearty desires that your time of stay there for the effectual perfecting and finishing of your so weighty affairs may not seem tedious, nor be any discouragement unto you; rather than you shall suffer for loss of time here, or expense there, we are resolved to stretch forth our hands at your return, beyond our strength, for your supply. Your loving bed-fellow is in health, and presents her endeared affection, so are all your family. Mr. Sayles, also, and his, with the rest of your friends throughout the colony, who wish and desire earnestly to see your face.

"Sir, we are yours; leaving you unto the Lord, we heartily take leave.

"From the General Assembly of this colony of Providence Plantations, assembled in the town of Providence, the 28th of October, 1652.

"JOHN GREENE, *General Recorder.*" *

The order of the Council of State was sent over by Mr. William Dyre, who, perhaps, accompanied the agents to England. This order directed the towns to unite again, as before; but it was found, in this, as in other cases, easier to command, than to enforce obedience. The towns seem

* Providence Records. This letter was written, apparently, in accordance with the following act, passed on the 3d of June preceding: "Whereas we have received divers loving letters from our agent, Mr. Roger Williams, in England, wherein the careful proceedings are manifested unto us concerning our public affairs, and yet no answering letters of encouragement have been sent unto him from this colony; therefore the town doth take it into consideration, and orders to make arrangements for a committee of the two towns of Warwick and Providence to write to him."

to have been jealous of each other, and tenacious of their claims to precedence. It was found difficult to procure a meeting, to adjust the government; the two towns on the island insisting that the meeting should be held there, as the largest part of the colony, while the towns of Providence and Warwick made a similar claim, with the plausible reason, that they had steadily adhered to the charter.

The result was, either from mistake or from a rigid adherence to etiquette, that two meetings were held. Mr. Backus says:*

"The towns on the main met at Providence, May 17, 1653, and elected their officers. An assembly met at the same time on the island, and chose Mr. Sanford their President, and some freemen coming from the main, they chose an assistant for each town in the colony; and they sent Mr. James Barker and Mr. Richard Knight to Mr. Coddington, to demand the statute book and book of records. And as it was then a time of war betwixt England and Holland, and a mention was made of it in the letters which confirmed their charter, Dyre thought to make his advantage thereby, and procured commissions for himself, Capt. Underhill and Edward Hull, to act against the Dutch in America; and some cannon, with twenty men, were sent to the English, on the east end of Long-Island, to enable them to act against the Dutch, who lay to the westward of them. This alarmed Providence colony, who met again in June, and a third time at Warwick, on August 13, when they answered a letter from the Massachusetts, and remonstrated against being drawn into a war with the Dutch; and wrote to Mr. Williams an account of Dyre's conduct, and of their being urged to give up their former actings as null; but, say they, 'being still in the same order you left us, and observing two great evils that such a course would bring upon us: First, the hazard of involving in all the disorders and bloodshed which have been committed on Rhode-Island since their separation from us.' Secondly, 'the invading and frustrating of justice in divers weighty causes, then orderly depending in our courts, in some of which causes, Mr. Smith, President, William Field, &c.

* Vol. i. p. 279.

were deeply concerned;' therefore they could not yield to such a motion.'"

Mr. Williams and Mr. Clarke continued in England, endeavoring to sustain the rights of the colony. They had many opposers, but they found a steady and powerful friend in Sir Henry Vane.* At his seat Mr. Williams spent a portion of his time. While there, he wrote the following letter to the towns of Providence and Warwick. It exhibits his generous self-devotion for the public good, his love for his family, and his characteristic regard for the Indians:

"From Sir Henry Vane's, at Belleau, in Lincolnshire.

"*April* 1*st*, 53, (*so called.*)

"My dear and loving friends and neighbors of Providence and Warwick, our noble friend, Sir Henry Vane, having the navy of England mostly depending on his care, and going down to the navy at Portsmouth, I was invited by them both to accompany his lady to Lincolnshire, where I shall yet stay, as I fear, until the ship is gone. I must therefore pray your pardon, that by the post I send this to London. I hope it may have pleased the Most High Lord of sea and land to bring Capt. Ch–rst–n's ship and dear Mr. Dyre unto you, and with him the Council's letters, which answer the petition Sir Henry Vane and myself drew up, and the Council, by Sir Henry's mediation, granted us, for the confirmation of the charter, until the determination of the controversy. This determination, you may please to understand, is hindered by two main obstructions. The first is the mighty war with the Dutch, which makes England and Holland and the nations tremble. This hath made the Parliament set Sir Henry Vane and two or three more as commissioners to manage the war, which they

* Sir Henry Vane was born in England. He was a non-conformist, and he came to New-England in 1635. The next year he was elected Governor of Massachusetts, though he was only twenty-four years of age. He became a follower of Mrs. Hutchinson, and was soon superseded by Governor Winthrop. He returned to England, where he took a decided part against the King, and opposed Cromwell. After the restoration, he was executed for high treason, June 14, 1662, aged fifty years. He died with great firmness and dignity. He appears to have been an able man, sincerely pious, and a true friend of liberty

have done, with much engaging the name of God with them, who hath appeared in helping sixty of ours against almost three hundred of their men-of-war, and perchance to the sinking and taking about one hundred of theirs, and but one of ours, which was sunk by our own men. Our second obstruction is the opposition of our adversaries, Sir Arthur Haselrig and Col. Fenwicke, who hath married his daughter, Mr. Winslow, and Mr. Hopkins, both in great place; and all the friends they can make in Parliament and Council, and all the priests, both Presbyterian and Independent; so that we stand as two armies, ready to engage, observing the motions and postures each of the other, and yet shy each of other. Under God, the sheet-anchor of our ship is Sir Henry, who will do as the eye of God leads him, and he faithfully promised me that he would observe the motion of our New-England business, while I staid some ten weeks with his lady in Lincolnshire. Besides, here is great thoughts and preparation for a new Parliament; some of our friends are apt to think another Parliament will more favor us and our cause than this has done. You may please to put my condition into your soul's cases; remember I am a father and a husband. I have longed earnestly to return with the last ship, and with these, yet I have not been willing to withdraw my shoulders from the burthen, lest it pinch others, and may fall heavy upon all; except you are pleased to give to me a discharge. If you conceive it necessary for me still to attend this service, pray you consider if it be not convenient that my poor wife be encouraged to come over to me, and to wait together on the good pleasure of God for the end of this matter. You know my many weights hanging on me, how my own place stands, and how many reasons I have to cause me to make haste, yet I would not lose their estates, peace and liberty, by leaving hastily. I write to my dear wife, my great desire of her coming while I stay, yet left it to the freedom of her spirit, because of the many dangers; truly, at present the seas are dangerous, but not comparably so much, nor likely to be, because of the late great defeat of the Dutch, and their present sending to us offers of peace.

"My dear friends, although it pleased God himself, by many favors, to encourage me, yet please you to remember, that no man can stay here as I do, leaving a present em-

ployment there, without much self-denial, which I beseech God for more, and for you also, that no private respects, or gains, or quarrels, may cause you to neglect the public and common safety, peace and liberties. I beseech the blessed God to keep fresh in your thoughts what he hath done for Providence Plantations.

"My dear respects to yourselves, wives and children. I beseech the eternal God to be seen amongst you; so prays your most faithful and affectionate friend and servant,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"P. S. My love to all my Indian friends."*

The difficulties in the colony continued, and were artfully fomented by uneasy men, who thought disorder more propitious to their interests than the stable dominion of law and good government. Mr. Williams felt that his presence was needed at home, that he might, if possible, bring the discordant towns into harmonious co-operation. He therefore left Mr. Clarke in England, to prosecute the duties of their mission, and returned, early in the summer of 1654. He landed at Boston, and being furnished with an order from the Lord Protector's Council, requiring the government of Massachusetts to allow him in future to embark or land in their territories, he was not molested. He brought the following letter from Sir Henry Vane, addressed to the inhabitants of the colony of Rhode-Island:

"Loving and Christian friends,

"I could not refuse this bearer, Mr. Roger Williams, my kind friend and ancient acquaintance, to be accompanied with these few lines from myself to you, upon his return to Providence colony; though, perhaps, my private and retired condition, which the Lord, of his mercy, hath brought me into, might have argued strongly enough for my silence; but, indeed, something I hold myself bound to say to you, out of the Christian love I bear you, and for his sake whose name is called upon by you and engaged in your behalf. How is it that there are such divisions amongst you? Such headiness, tumults, disorders, injustice? The noise echoes into the ears of all, as well friends as enemies, by every return of ships from those parts. Is not the fear and awe of God amongst you to re-

* Backus, vol. i. pp. 285–8.

strain? Is not the love of Christ in you, to fill you with yearning bowels, one towards another, and constrain you not to live to yourselves, but to him that died for you, yea, and is risen again? Are there no wise men amongst you? No public self-denying spirits, that at least, upon the grounds of public safety, equity and prudence, can find out some way or means of union and reconciliation for you amongst yourselves, before you become a prey to common enemies, especially since this state, by the last letter from the Council of State, give you your freedom, as supposing a better use would have been made of it than there hath been? Surely, when kind and simple remedies are applied and are ineffectual, it speaks loud and broadly the high and dangerous distempers of such a body, as if the wounds were incurable. But I hope better things from you, though I thus speak, and should be apt to think, that by commissioners agreed on and appointed on all parts, and on behalf of all interests, in a general meeting, such a union and common satisfaction might arise, as, through God's blessing, might put a stop to your growing breaches and distractions, silence your enemies, encourage your friends, honor the name of God, (which of late hath been much blasphemed, by reason of you,) and in particular, refresh and revive the sad heart of him who mourns over your present evils, as being your affectionate friend, to serve you in the Lord.

"H. VANE.

"*Belleau, the 8th of February*, 1653–4."*

Soon after Mr. Williams returned, he wrote the following letter to his friend, Mr. Winthrop:

"For my much honored, kind friend, Mr. John Winthrop, at Pequod.

"*Providence, July* 12, 54, (*so called.*)

"Sir,

"I was humbly bold to salute you from our native country, and now, by the gracious hand of the Lord, once more saluting this wilderness, I crave your wonted patience to my wonted boldness, who ever honored and loved, and ever shall, the root and branches of your dear name. How joy-

* Backus, vol. i. p. 288.

ful, therefore, was I to hear of your abode as a stake and pillar in these parts, and of your healths, your own, Mrs. Winthrop, and your branches, although some sad mixtures we have had from the sad tidings (if true) of the late loss and cutting off of one of them.

"Sir, I was lately upon the wing to have waited on you at your house. I had disposed all for my journey, and my staff was in my hand, but it pleased the Lord to interpose some impediments, so that I am compelled to a suspension for a season, and choose at present thus to visit you. I had no letters for you, but yours were well. I was at the lodgings of Major Winthrop and Mr. Peters, but I missed them. Your brother flourisheth in good esteem, and is eminent for maintaining the freedom of the conscience as to matters of belief, religion and worship. Your father Peters* preacheth the same doctrine, though not so zealously as some years since, yet cries out against New-English rigidities and persecutions, their civil injuries and wrongs to himself, and their unchristian dealing with him, in excommunicating his distracted wife. All this he told me in his lodgings, at Whitehall, those lodgings which I was told were Canterbury's; but he himself told me, that that library, wherein we were together, was Canterbury's, and given him by the Parliament. His wife lives from him not wholly, but much distracted. He tells me he had but two hundred a year, and he allowed her fourscore per annum of it. Surely, Sir, the most holy Lord is most wise in all the trials he exerciseth his people with. He told me that his affliction from his wife stirred him up to action abroad, and when success tempted him to pride, the bitterness in his bosom comforts was a cooler and a bridle to him.

"Surely, Sir, your father, and all the people of God in England, formerly called *Puritanus Anglicanus*, of late *Roundheads*, now the *Sectarians*, (as more or less cut off from the parishes) are now in the saddle and at the helm, so high that *non datur descensus nisi cadendo*. Some cheer up their spirits with the impossibility of another fall or turn, so doth Major Gen. Harrison, and Mr. Feake, and Mr. John Simson, now in Windsor Castle for preaching against this last change, and against the Protector, as an usurper,

* Mr. Winthrop had married a daughter of the Rev. Hugh Peters.

Richard III., &c. So did many think of the last Parliament, who were of the vote of fifty-six against priests and tithes, opposite to the vote of the fifty-four who were for them, at least for a while. Major Gen. Harrison was the second in the nation of late, when the loving General and himself joined against the former Long Parliament and dissolved them, but now being the head of the fifty-six party, he was confined by the Protector and Council, within five miles of his father's house, in Staffordshire. That sentence he not obeying, he told me (the day before my leaving London) he was to be sent prisoner into Harfordshire. Surely, Sir, he is a very gallant, most deserving, heavenly man, but most high flown for the kingdom of the saints, and the fifth monarchy now risen, and their sun never to set again, &c. Others, as to my knowledge, the Protector, Lord President Lawrence, and others at helm, with Sir Henry Vane, (retired into Lincolnshire, yet daily missed and courted for his assistance) are not so full of that faith of miracles, but still imagine changes and persecutions and the very slaughter of the witnesses, before that glorious morning so much desired of a worldly kingdom, if ever such a kingdom (as literally it is by so many expounded) be to arise in this present world and dispensation.

"Sir, I know not how far your judgment hath concurred with the design against the Dutch. I must acknowledge my mourning for it, and when I heard of it, at Portsmouth, I confess I wrote letters to the Protector and President, from thence, as against a most uningenuous and unchristian design, at such a time, when the world stood gazing at the so famous treaty for peace, which was then between the two States, and near finished when we set sail. Much I can tell you of the answer I had from Court, and I think of the answers I had from heaven, viz. that the Lord would graciously retard us until the tidings of peace (from England) might quench the fire in the kindling of it.

"Sir, I mourn that any of our parts were so madly injurious to trouble yours. I pity poor Sabando. I yet have hopes in God that we shall be more loving and peaceable neighbors. I had word from the Lord President to Portsmouth, that the Council had passed three letters as to our business. First, to encourage us; second, to our neighbor colonies not to molest us; third, in exposition of that word

dominion, in the late frame of the government of England, viz. that liberty of conscience should be maintained in all American plantations, &c.

"Sir, a great man in America told me, that he thought New-England would not bear it. I hope better, and that not only the necessity, but the equity, piety and Christianity of that freedom will more and more shine forth, not to licentiousness, (as all mercies are apt to be abused) but to the beauty of Christianity and the lustre of true faith in God and love to poor mankind, &c.

"Sir, I have desires of keeping home. I have long had scruples of selling the natives aught but what may bring or tend to civilizing; I therefore neither brought, nor shall sell them, loose coats nor breeches. It pleased the Lord to call me for some time, and with some persons, to practise the Hebrew, the Greek, Latin, French and Dutch. The Secretary of the Council, (Mr. Milton) for my Dutch I read him, read me many more languages. Grammar rules begin to be esteemed a tyranny. I taught two young gentlemen, a Parliament man's sons, as we teach our children English, by words, phrases and constant talk, &c. I have begun with mine own three boys, who labor besides; others are coming to me.

"Sir, I shall rejoice to receive a word of your healths, of the Indian wars, and to be ever yours,

"R. W.

"Sir, I pray seal and send the enclosed."

Among other remarkable passages, in the foregoing letter, the allusion to Milton is not the least interesting. He was then the Secretary of the government, and in that office he honored the English name, by his eloquent writings in defence of liberty. Mr. Williams was naturally attracted to a communion with the lofty spirit of Milton. His was a kindred mind, imbued with the same love of liberty, and alike free from selfish ends. Both encountered persecution, and endured poverty for their principles. They both acted in the same spirit of self-sacrifice for the good of others; and Mr. Williams might have used, with equal truth and propriety, the magnanimous and almost triumphant language of Milton, in his sonnet on the loss of

his sight, which was hastened by his intense application to his noble "Defensio pro Populo Anglicano."

> "I argue not
> Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
> Of heart or hope, but still bear up, and steer
> Right onward."

The preceding letter bears an incidental testimony to the various learning of Milton, and it implies, that Mr. Williams was sufficiently versed in the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Dutch and French languages, to teach them. It shows, moreover, that, like Milton himself, and Dr. Johnson, and other distinguished men, Mr. Williams employed himself in the honorable office of an instructor of youth; an office worthy of the most gifted mind, and which ranks, in the estimate of sober reason, second to no other function, except that of the teacher of religion. This fact is the more honorable to Mr. Williams, because he became a teacher, as a means of subsistence, while he was serving his colony in England.*

* It appears, that while Mr. Williams was in England, he was obliged to provide for his own support, while his large family, we may presume, were injured by his absence. The General Assembly of the towns of Providence and Warwick, expressed in a letter, their regret, that they could not send him money, in consequence of their domestic trials, but informed him that they meant to aid his family. In his "Bloody Tenet made more Bloody," he mentions his exertions to supply the poor in London with fuel, during the civil wars; to which service he was led, probably, by his benevolent and active temper, as well as by the desire to obtain a subsistence. He says: "I can tell, that when these discussions were prepared for the public in London, his time was eaten up in attendance upon the service of the Parliament and city, for the supply of the poor of the city with wood, during the stop of the coal from Newcastle, and the mutinies of the poor for firing [for which service, he adds in a note, through the hurry of the times and the necessity of his departure, he lost his recompense to this day.] It is true, he might have run the road of preferment, as well in Old as in New-England, and have had the leisure and time of such who eat and drink with the drunken, and smite with the fist of wickedness their fellow-servants." (p. 38.) In his letter to the town of Providence, in 1654, he says, "I was unfortunately fetched and drawn from my employment, and sent to so vast distance from my family to do your work of a high and costly nature, for so many days, and weeks, and months together, and there left to starve, or steal, or beg, or borrow. But blessed be God, who gave me favor to borrow one while, and to work another, and thereby to pay your debts there, and to come over with your credit and honor, as an

In the following letter to the town of Providence, Mr. Williams alludes, in affecting terms, to his toils and sacrifices, and to the ungrateful requital with which they had been met by some individuals :

"Well beloved friends and neighbors,

"I am like a man in a great fog. I know not well how to steer. I fear to run upon the rocks at home, having had trials abroad. I fear to run quite backward, as men in a mist do, and undo all that I have been a long time undoing myself to do, viz. to keep up the name of a people, a free people, not enslaved to the bondages and iron yokes of the great (both soul and body) oppressions of the English and barbarians about us, nor to the divisions and disorders within ourselves. Since I set the first step of any English foot into these wild parts, and have maintained a chargeable and hazardous correspondence with the barbarians, and spent almost five years' time with the state of England, to keep off the rage of the English against us, what have I reaped of the root of being the stepping-stone of so many families and towns about us, but grief, and sorrow, and bitterness? I have been charged with folly for that freedom and liberty which I have always stood for ; I say liberty and equality, both in land and government. I have been blamed for parting with Moshassuck, and afterward Pawtuxet, (which were mine own as truly as any man's coat upon his back,) without reserving to myself a foot of land, or an inch of voice in any matter, more than to my servants and strangers. It hath been told me that I labored for a licentious and contentious people; that I have foolishly parted with town and colony advantages, by which I might have preserved both town and colony in as good order as any in the country about us. This, and ten times more, I have been censured for, and at this present am called a traitor, by one party, against the state of England, for not maintaining the charter and the colony; and it is said that I am as good as banished by yourselves, and that both sides wished that I might never have landed, that the fire of con-

agent from you, who had in your name grappled with the agents and friends of all your enemies round about you." Few stronger examples of disinterested patriotism could be found in any age or country.

tention might have had no stop in burning. Indeed, the words have been so sharp between myself and some lately, that at last I was forced to say, they might well silence all complaints if I once began to complain, who was unfortunately fetched and drawn from my employment, and sent to so vast distance from my family, to do your work of a high and costly nature, for so many days and weeks and months together, and there left to starve, or steal, or beg or borrow. But blessed be God, who gave me favor to borrow one while, and to work another, and thereby to pay your debts there, and to come over with your credit and honor, as an agent from you, who had, in your name, grappled with the agents and friends of all your enemies round about you. I am told that your opposites thought on me, and provided, as I may say, a sponge to wipe off your scores and debts in England, but that it was obstructed by yourselves, who rather meditated on means and new agents to be sent over, to cross what Mr. Clarke and I obtained. But, gentlemen, blessed be God, who faileth not, and blessed be his name for his wonderful PROVIDENCES, by which alone this town and colony, and that grand cause of TRUTH AND FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE, hath been upheld to this day. And blessed be his name who hath again quenched so much of our fires hitherto, and hath brought your names and his own name thus far out of the dirt of scorn, reproach, &c. I find among yourselves and your opposites that of Solomon true, that the contentions of brethren (some that lately were so) are the bars of a castle, and not easily broken; and I have heard some of both sides zealously talking of undoing themselves by a trial in England. Truly, friends, I cannot but fear you lost a fair wind lately, when this town was sent to for its deputies, and you were not pleased to give an overture unto the rest of the inhabitants about it; yea, and when yourselves thought that I invited you to some conference tending to reconciliation, before the town should act in so fundamental a business, you were pleased to forestall that, so that being full of grief, shame and astonishment, yea, and fear that all that is now done, especially in our town of Providence, is but provoking the spirits of men to fury and desperation, I pray your leave to pray you to remember (that which I lately told your opposites) *only by pride cometh contention.* If there be

humility on the one side, yet there is pride on the other, and certainly the eternal God will engage against the proud. I therefore pray you to examine, as I have done them, your proceedings in this first particular. Secondly, Love covereth a multitude of sins. Surely your charges and complaints each against other, have not hid nor covered any thing, as we use to cover the nakedness of those we love. If you will now profess not to have disfranchised humanity and love, but that, as David in another case, you will sacrifice to the common peace, and common safety, and common credit, that which may be said to cost you something, I pray your loving leave to tell you, that if I were in your soul's case, I would send unto your opposites such a line as this: 'Neighbors, at the constant request, and upon the constant mediation which our neighbor Roger Williams, since his arrival, hath used to us, both for pacification and accommodation of our sad differences, and also upon the late endeavors in all the other towns for an union, we are persuaded to remove our obstruction, viz. that paper of contention between us, and to deliver it into the hands of our aforesaid neighbor, and to obliterate that order, which that paper did occasion. This removed, you may be pleased to meet with, and debate freely, and vote in all matters with us, as if such grievances had not been amongst us. Secondly, if yet aught remain grievous, which we ourselves, by free debate and conference, cannot compose, we offer to be judged and censured by four men, which out of any part of the colony you shall choose two, and we the other.'

"Gentlemen, I only add, that I crave your loving pardon to your bold but true friend,

"ROGER WILLIAMS."

The pathetic earnestness, and conciliatory yet dignified tone of this letter, produced a favorable effect. At a town meeting held in Providence, in August, Mr. Williams was requested to prepare an answer to Sir Henry Vane's letter, in the name of the town. This answer, dated August 27, 1654, is as follows. It bears the characteristics of Mr. Williams' style, and it expresses his opinions of certain public men and measures:

"Sir,

"Although we are aggrieved at your late retirement from

the helm of public affairs, yet we rejoice to reap the sweet fruits of your rest in your pious and loving lines, most seasonably sent unto us. Thus the sun, when he retires his brightness from the world, yet from under the very clouds we perceive his presence, and enjoy some light and heat and sweet refreshings. Sir, your letters were directed to all and every particular town of this Providence colony. Surely, Sir, among the many providences of the Most High, towards this town of Providence, and this Providence colony, we cannot but see apparently his gracious hand, providing your honorable self for so noble and true a friend to an outcast and despised people. From the first beginning of this Providence colony, occasioned by the banishment of some in this place from the Massachusetts, we say ever since to this very day, we have reaped the sweet fruits of your constant loving kindness and favor towards us. Oh, Sir, whence, then, is it that you have bent your bow, and shot your sharp and bitter arrows now against us? Whence is it that you charge us with divisions, disorders, &c.? Sir, we humbly pray your gentle acceptance of our two fold answer.

"First, we have been greatly disturbed and distracted by the ambition and covetousness of some amongst us. Sir, we were in complete order, until Mr. Coddington, wanting that public, self-denying spirit which you commend to us in your letter, procured, by most untrue information, a monopoly of part of the colony, viz. Rhode-Island, to himself, and so occasioned our general disturbance and distractions. Secondly, Mr. Dyre, with no less want of a public spirit, being ruined by party contentions with Mr. Coddington, and being betrusted to bring from England the letters of the Council of State for our re-unitings, he hopes for a recruit to himself by other men's goods; and, contrary to the State's intentions and expressions, plungeth himself and some others in most unnecessary and unrighteous plundering, both of Dutch and French, and English also, to our great grief, who protested against such abuse of our power from England; and the end of it is to the shame and reproach of himself, and the very English name, as all these parts do witness.

"Sir, our second answer is, (that we may not lay all the load upon other men's backs,) that possibly a sweet cup hath

rendered many of us wanton and too active, for we have long drunk of the cup of as great liberties as any people that we can hear of under the whole heaven. We have not only been long free (together with all New-England) from the iron yoke of wolvish bishops, and their popish ceremonies, (against whose cruel oppressions God raised up your noble spirit in Parliament,) but we have sitten quiet and dry from the streams of blood spilt by that war in our native country. We have not felt the new chains of the Presbyterian tyrants, nor in this colony have we been consumed with the over-zealous fire of the (so called) godly christian magistrates. Sir, we have not known what an excise means; we have almost forgotten what tythes are, yea, or taxes either, to church or commonwealth. We could name other special privileges, ingredients of our sweet cup, which your great wisdom knows to be very powerful (except more than ordinary watchfulness) to render the best of men wanton and forgetful. But, blessed be your love, and your loving heart and hand, awakening any of our sleepy spirits by your sweet alarm; and blessed be your noble family, root and branch, and all your pious and prudent engagements and retirements. We hope you shall no more complain of the saddening of your loving heart by the men of Providence town or of Providence colony, but that when we are gone and rotten, our posterity and children after us shall read in our town records your pious and favorable letters and loving kindness to us, and this our answer, and real endeavor after peace and righteousness; and to be found, Sir, your most obliged, and most humble servants, the town of Providence, in Providence colony, in New-England.

"GREGORY DEXTER,
Town Clerk."

The town of Providence, at the instance of Mr. Williams, and the other towns, as we may presume, by his influence, appointed commissioners, who met on the 31st of August, and re-established the government on its old foundations.* They appointed a general election, to be

* The names of the commissioners are preserved by Backus, vol. i. p. 296, copied from the Providence records.

held at Warwick, on the 12th of September, at which Mr. Williams was chosen President of the colony, and, together with Mr. Gregory Dexter, was requested to "draw forth and send letters of humble thanksgiving to his Highness, the Lord Protector, and Sir Henry Vane, Mr. Holland, and Mr. John Clarke, in the name of the colony; and Mr. Williams is desired to subscribe them, by virtue of his office."

By the wisdom, and the firm yet healing gentleness of Mr. Williams, was the colony thus re-united, after a disorderly interval of several years. The little bark was rescued from the rocks which threatened her destruction, and once more launched forth, her faithful pilot at the helm, and her banner, displaying her chosen motto "Hope," floating again upon the breeze.*

The following letter to the government of Massachusetts, alludes to some disturbances with the Indians, which occurred about this time. Ninigret, the Niantick sachem, had made war with the Indians of Long Island,† and was supposed to be in alliance with the Dutch at New-York. The commissioners of the united colonies sent a considerable force against Ninigret, under the command of Major Willard, of Massachusetts, but they returned without success, the sachem and his warriors having taken refuge in a swamp. The real cause, perhaps, why the war was not vigorously waged, was, that Massachusetts was opposed to hostilities, and with a wisdom and humanity which honored her rulers, prevented at this time, as she had done on a former occasion, a general war with the natives.‡ We may

* There is a slight anachronism here. It was in May, 1664, that the General Assembly "ordered, that the seal with the motto *Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*, with the word *Hope* over the anchor, be the present seal of the colony." The seal adopted in 1647, when the government was organized under the first charter, bore simply an anchor.

† Ninigret returned a haughty answer to a message from the commissioners. He said, that he attacked the Long-Island Indians, because they had killed a sachem's son, and sixty of his men, and he would not make peace with them. He asked of the commissioners, in a tone, which showed that he considered the Narragansets as a perfectly independent nation: "If your Governor's son was slain, and several other men, would you ask counsel of *another nation* when and how to right yourselves?"

‡ Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 172.

hope, that the admirable letter of Mr. Williams had some effect in producing this pacific temper:

"*Providence*, 5, 8, 54, (*so called.*)

"Much honored Sirs,

"I truly wish you peace, and pray your gentle acceptance of a word, I hope not unreasonable.

"We have in these parts a sound of your meditations of war against these natives, amongst whom we dwell. I consider that war is one of those three great, sore plagues, with which it pleaseth God to affect the sons of men. I consider, also, that I refused, lately, many offers in my native country, out of a sincere desire to seek the good and peace of this.

"I remember, that upon the express advice of your ever honored Mr. Winthrop, deceased,* I first adventured to begin a plantation among the thickest of these barbarians.

"That in the Pequod wars, it pleased your honored government to employ me in the hazardous and weighty service of negotiating a league between yourselves and the Narragansets, when the Pequod messengers, who sought the Narragansets' league against the English, had almost ended that my work and life together.

"That at the subscribing of that solemn league, which, by the mercy of the Lord, I had procured with the Narragansets, your government was pleased to send unto me the copy of it, subscribed by all hands there, which yet I keep as a monument and a testimony of peace and faithfulness between you both.

"That, since that time, it hath pleased the Lord so to

* Governor Winthrop died, at Boston, on the 26th of March, 1649, in the 62d year of his age. He was born in Groton, Suffolk, (Eng.) January 12, 1588. He was a justice of peace at the age of eighteen. He had an estate of six or seven hundred pounds a year, which he turned into money, and embarked his all to promote the settlement of New-England. He was eleven times chosen Governor of Massachusetts, and spent his whole estate in the public service. His son and grandson were successively Governors of Connecticut. He was a great and good man. His Journal is a monument to his memory—"ære perennius." He was a sincere friend of Roger Williams, though he disapproved his principles, and Mr. Williams always spoke of him with strong affection.

order it, that I have been more or less interested and used in all your great transactions of war or peace, between the English and the natives, and have not spared purse, nor pains, nor hazards, (very many times,) that the whole land, English and natives, might sleep in peace securely.

"That in my last negotiations in England, with the Parliament, Council of State, and his Highness,* I have been forced to be known so much, that if I should be silent, I should not only betray mine own peace and yours, but also should be false to their honorable and princely names, whose loves and affections, as well as their supreme authority, are not a little concerned in the peace or war of this country.

"At my last departure for England, I was importuned by the Narraganset sachems, and especially by Ninigret, to present their petition to the high sachems of England, that they might not be forced from their religion, and, for not changing their religion, be invaded by war; for they said they were daily visited with threatenings by Indians that came from about the Massachusetts, that if they would not pray, they should be destroyed by war. With this their petition I acquainted, in private discourses, divers of the chief of our nation, and especially his Highness, who, in many discourses I had with him, never expressed the least tittle of displeasure, as hath been here reported, but, in the midst of disputes, ever expressed a high spirit of love and gentleness, and was often pleased to please himself with very many questions, and my answers, about the Indian affairs of this country; and, after all hearing of yourself and us, it hath pleased his Highness and his Council to grant, amongst other favors to this colony, some expressly concerning the very Indians, the native inhabitants of this jurisdiction.

"I, therefore, humbly offer to your prudent and impartial view, first, these two considerable terms, it pleased the Lord to use to all that profess his name (Rom. 12: 18,) if it be possible, and all men.

"I never was against the righteous use of the civil sword of men or nations, but yet since all men of con-

* Cromwell.

science or prudence ply to windward, to maintain their wars to be defensive, (as did both King and Scotch, and English, and Irish too, in the late wars,) I humbly pray your consideration, whether it be not only possible, but very easy, to live and die in peace with all the natives of this country.

"For, secondly, are not all the English of this land, generally, a persecuted people from their native soil? and hath not the God of peace and Father of mercies made these natives more friendly in this, than our native countrymen in our own land to us? Have they not entered leagues of love, and to this day continued peaceable commerce with us? Are not our families grown up in peace amongst them? Upon which I humbly ask, how it can suit with Christian ingenuity to take hold of some seeming occasions for their destructions, which, though the heads be only aimed at, yet, all experience tells us, falls on the body and the innocent.

"Thirdly, I pray it may be remembered how greatly the name of God is concerned in this affair, for it cannot be hid, how all England and other nations ring with the glorious conversion of the Indians of New-England. You know how many books are dispersed throughout the nation, of the subject, (in some of them the Narraganset chief sachems are publicly branded, for refusing to pray and be converted;) have all the pulpits in England been commanded to sound of this glorious work, (I speak not ironically, but only mention what all the printed books mention,) and that, by the highest command and authority of Parliament, and church wardens went from house to house, to gather supplies for this work.

"Honored Sirs,

"Whether I have been and am a friend to the natives' turning to civility and Christianity, and whether I have been instrumental, and desire so to be, according to my light, I will not trouble you with; only I beseech you consider, how the name of the most holy and jealous God may be preserved between the clashings of these two, viz: the glorious conversion of the Indians in New-England, and the unnecessary wars and cruel destructions of the Indians in New-England.

"Fourthly, I beseech you forget not, that although we

are apt to play with this plague of war more than with the other two, famine and pestilence, yet I beseech you consider how the present events of all wars that ever have been in the world, have been wonderful fickle, and the future calamities and revolutions, wonderful in the latter end.

"Heretofore, not having liberty of taking ship in your jurisdiction, I was forced to repair unto the Dutch, where mine eyes did see that first breaking forth of that Indian war, which the Dutch begun, upon the slaughter of some Dutch by the Indians; and they questioned not to finish it in a few days, insomuch that the name of peace, which some offered to mediate, was foolish and odious to them. But before we weighed anchor, their bowries were in flames; Dutch and English were slain. Mine eyes saw their flames at their towns, and the flights and hurries of men, women and children, the present removal of all that could for Holland; and, after vast expenses, and mutual slaughters of Dutch, English, and Indians, about four years, the Dutch were forced, to save their plantation from ruin, to make up a most unworthy and dishonorable peace with the Indians.

"How frequently is that saying in England, that both Scotch and English had better have borne loans, ship money, &c. than run upon such rocks, that even success and victory have proved, and are yet like to prove. Yea, this late war with Holland, however begun with zeal against God's enemies, as some in Parliament said, yet what fruits brought it forth, but the breach of the Parliament, the enraging of the nation by taxes, the ruin of thousands who depended on manufactures and merchandize, the loss of many thousand seamen, and others, many of whom many worlds are not worthy?

"But, lastly, if any be yet zealous of kindling this fire for God, &c. I beseech that gentleman, whoever he be, to lay himself in the opposite scale, with one of the fairest buds that ever the sun of righteousness cherished, Josiah, that most zealous and melting-hearted reformer, who would to war, and against warnings, and fell in most untimely death and lamentations, and now stands, a pillar of salt to all succeeding generations.

"Now, with your patience, a word to these nations at

war, (occasion of yours,) the Narragansets and Long-Islanders, I know them both experimentally, and therefore pray you to remember,

"First, that the Narragansets and Mohawks are the two great bodies of Indians in this country, and they are confederates, and long have been, and they both yet are friendly and peaceable to the English. I do humbly conceive, that if ever God calls us to a just war with either of them, he calls us to make sure of the one to a friend. It is true some distaste was lately here amongst them, but they parted friends, and some of the Narragansets went home with them, and I fear that both these and the Long-Islanders and Mohegans, and all the natives of the land, may, upon the sound of a defeat of the English, be induced easily to join each with other against us.

"2. The Narragansets, as they were the first, so they have been long confederates with you; they have been true, in all the Pequod wars, to you. They occasioned the Mohegans to come in, too, and so occasioned the Pequods' downfall.

"3. I cannot yet learn, that ever it pleased the Lord to permit the Narragansets to stain their hands with any English blood, neither in open hostilities nor secret murders, as both Pequods and Long-Islanders did, and Mohegans also, in the Pequod wars. It is true they are barbarians, but their greatest offences against the English have been matters of money, or petty revenging of themselves on some Indians, upon extreme provocations, but God kept them clear of our blood.

"4. For the people, many hundred English have experimented them to be inclined to peace and love with the English nation.

"Their late famous long-lived Canonicus so lived and died, and in the same most honorable manner and solemnity (in their way) as you laid to sleep your prudent peacemaker, Mr. Winthrop, did they honor this, their prudent and peaceable prince. His son, Mexham*, inherits his spirit. Yea, through all their towns and countries, how frequently do many, and oft-times one Englishman, travel alone with safety and loving kindness!

* This name is spelled in several different ways.

"The cause and root of all the present mischief, is the pride of two barbarians, Ascassassotic, the Long-Island sachem, and Ninigret, of the Narraganset. The former is proud and foolish; the latter is proud and fierce. I have not seen him these many years, yet from their sober men I hear he pleads,

"First, that Ascassassotic, a very inferior sachem, bearing himself upon the English, hath slain three or four of his people, and since that, sent him challenges and darings to fight, and mend himself.

"2. He, Ninigret, consulted, by solemn messengers, with the chief of the English Governors, Major Endicott, then Governor of the Massachusetts, who sent him an implicit consent to right himself, upon which they all plead that the English have just occasion of displeasure.

"3. After he had taken revenge upon the Long-Islanders, and brought away about fourteen captives, divers of their chief women, yet he restored them all again, upon the mediation and desire of the English.

"4. After this peace made, the Long-Islanders, pretending to visit Ninigret, at Block-Island, slaughtered of his Narragansets near thirty persons, at midnight, two of them of great note, especially Wepiteammoc's son, to whom Ninigret was uncle.

"5. In the prosecution of this war, although he had drawn down the Islanders to his assistance, yet, upon protestation of the English against his proceedings, he retreated, and dissolved his army.

"Honored Sirs,

"1. I know it is said the Long-Islanders are subjects; but I have heard this greatly questioned, and, indeed, I question whether any Indians in this country, remaining barbarous and pagan, may with truth or honor be called the English subjects.

"2. But grant them subjects, what capacity hath their late massacre of the Narragansets, with whom they had made peace, without the English consent, though still under the English name, put them into?

"3. All Indians are extremely treacherous; and if to their own nation, for private ends, revolting to strangers, what will they do upon the sound of one defeat of the English, or the trade of killing English cattle, and persons,

and plunder, which will, most certainly be the trade, if any considerable party escape alive, as mine eyes beheld in the Dutch war.

" But, I beseech you, say your thoughts and the thoughts of your wives and little ones, and the thoughts of all English, and of God's people in England, and the thoughts of his Highness and Council, (tender of these parts,) if, for the sake of a few inconsiderable pagans, and beasts, wallowing in idleness, stealing, lying, whoring, treacherous witchcrafts, blasphemies, and idolatries, all that the gracious hand of the Lord hath so wonderfully planted in the wilderness, should be destroyed.

" How much nobler were it, and glorious to the name of God and your own, that no pagan should dare to use the name of an English subject, who comes not out, in some degree, from barbarism to civility, in forsaking their filthy nakedness, in keeping some kind of cattle, which yet your councils and commands may tend to, and, as pious and prudent deceased Mr. Winthrop said, that civility may be a leading step to Christianity, is the humble desire of your most unfeigned in all services of love,

" ROGER WILLIAMS,
of Providence colony,
President."

Though Mr. Williams had succeeded in restoring the regular operation of the government, there were not wanting individuals who were uneasy and restive under restraints. A person, about this time, sent a paper to the town of Providence, affirming " that it was blood-guiltiness, and against the rule of the Gospel, to execute judgment upon transgressors against the private or public weal." This principle struck at the foundation of all civil society. There were, as we may easily suppose, some individuals, who had been drawn to Rhode-Island by the prospect of enjoying liberty, and who would gladly have cast off all restraint, and revelled in unbounded license.

Mr. Williams could not remain silent, while such sentiments were avowed. He accordingly wrote the following letter to the town. It is, in every respect, worthy of him. It presents, briefly, his principles of civil and religious liberty, illustrated by a happy comparison, and carefully

guarded by limitations, exact, clear, and in harmony with the dictates of reason and Scripture. The duty of civil obedience is maintained, as decisively as Mr. Cotton himself could have wished; while the rights of conscience are declared, with a precision, an enlarged comprehension of mind, and a liberality of feeling, of which no other example could be found at that early day. This letter is a sufficient reply to all the allegations against Mr. Williams of a spirit hostile to the civil peace; and it may be added, that the church which he founded at Providence, and all the churches of the same faith which have since multiplied over the land, have maintained precisely the same views of civil and religious duties and rights:

"That ever I should speak or write a tittle that tends to such an infinite liberty of conscience, is a mistake, and which I have ever disclaimed and abhorred. To prevent such mistakes, I at present shall only propose this case: There goes many a ship to sea, with many hundred souls in one ship, whose weal and woe is common, and is a true picture of a commonwealth, or a human combination or society. It hath fallen out sometimes that both Papists and Protestants, Jews and Turks, may be embarked in one ship; upon which supposal I affirm, that all the liberty of conscience, that ever I pleaded for, turns upon these two hinges: that none of the Papists, Protestants, Jews or Turks, be forced to come to the ship's prayers or worship, nor compelled from their own particular prayers or worship, if they practise any. I further add, that I never denied, that notwithstanding this liberty, the commander of this ship ought to command the ship's course, yea, and also command that justice, peace and sobriety be kept and practised, both among the seamen and all the passengers. If any of the seamen refuse to perform their service, or passengers to pay their freight; if any refuse to help, in person or purse, towards the common charges or defence; if any refuse to obey the common laws and orders of the ship, concerning their common peace or preservation; if any shall mutiny and rise up against their commanders and officers; if any should preach or write that there ought to be no commanders or officers, because all are equal in Christ, therefore no masters nor officers, nor laws

nor orders, no corrections nor punishments; I say, I never denied, but in such cases, whatever is pretended, the commander or commanders may judge, resist, compel and punish such transgressors, according to their deserts and merits. This, if seriously and honestly minded, may, if it so please the Father of Lights, let in some light to such as willingly shut not their eyes.

"I remain studious of your common peace and liberty.

ROGER WILLIAMS."

CHAPTER XXI.

Troubles in Rhode-Island—William Harris—Quakers—severe laws against them in other colonies—conduct of Rhode-Island—Mr. Williams and Mr. Harris—Mr. Williams not re-elected as President.

THE following letter from Mr. Williams to Mr. Winthrop is chiefly on his common theme, the Indians:

"To my honored, kind friend, Mr. Winthrop, at Pequod, these present.

"*Providence, the* 26, 2, 55, (*so called.*)

"Sir,

"Loving respects to you both presented, wishing you a joyful spring after all your sad and gloomy, sharp and bitter winter blasts and snows. Sir, one of your friends among the Narraganset sachems, Mexham, sends this messenger unto me and prays me to write to you for your help about a gun, which Kittatteash, Uncas his son, hath lately taken from this bearer, Ahauansquatuck, out of his house at Pawchauquet. He will not own any offence he gave him, but that he is subject to Mexham, though possibly Kittatteash may allege other causes, yea and true also. I doubt not of your loving eye on the matter, as God shall please to give you opportunity. Sir, the last first day divers of Boston merchants were with me, (about Sergeant Holsey run from Boston hither, and a woman after him, who lays her great belly to him.) They tell me, that by a bark come from Virginia, they are informed of God's merciful hand in the safe arrival of Major Sedgwick and that fleet in the West of England, and that General Penn was not yet gone out, but riding (all things ready) in Torbay, waiting for the word; and by letters from good and great friends in England, I understand there are like to be great agitations in this country, if that fleet succeed.

"Sir, a hue and cry came to my hand lately from the Governor at Boston, after two youths, one run from Captain Oliver, whom I lighted on and have returned; another from James Bill, of Boston, who I hear past through our town, and

said he was bound for Pequod. His name is James Pitnie; he hath on a blackish coat and hat, and a pair of greenish breeches and green knit stockings. I would now (with very many thanks) have returned you your Jesuit's Maxims, but I was loth to trust them in so wild a hand, nor some tidings which I have from England. These merchants tell me, that Blake was gone against the Duke of Legorne, and had sent for ten frigates more. Sir, the God of peace fill your soul with that strange kind of peace which passeth all understanding.

"So prays, Sir,

"Your unworthy R. W."

Mr. Williams, being now invested with the office of President, watched over the interests of the colony with his usual vigilance and zeal. There was an urgent need of all his wisdom and firmness. A disposition to abuse the liberty of conscience, was one of the evils which disturbed the colony. Mr. William Harris "sent his writings to the main and to the island, against all earthly powers, parliaments, laws, charters, magistrates, prisons, punishments, rates, yea, against all kings and princes, under the notion that the people should shortly cry out, '*No lords, no masters*,' and in open Court protested, before the whole colony Assembly, that he would maintain his writings with his blood."*

The avowal of such sentiments might well alarm the Assembly, not only for the peace of the colony, but for its character in the mother country. They accordingly appointed a committee, says Mr. Backus, "to deal with Mr. Harris."

Although the several towns were re-united in the government, yet individuals, who were royalists in principle, refused to obey it, and created factions. Complaints were made through Mr. Clarke, to the Protector; but Cromwell was too busy with concerns at home, to give much attention to the colonies. He addressed the following letter to the colony: †

* Backus, vol. i. p. 302. George Fox digged out of his Burrowes, p. 14.

† The General Assembly voted, that Mr. Williams should keep Cromwell's letter and the charter in his possession, in behalf of the colony.

"Gentlemen,

"Your agent here hath represented unto us some particulars concerning your government, which you judge necessary to be settled by us here, but by reason of other great and weighty affairs of the commonwealth, we have been necessitated to defer the consideration of them to further opportunity; in the mean time, we are willing to let you know, that you were to proceed in your government according to the tenor of your charter, formerly granted on that behalf, taking care of the peace and safety of those plantations, that neither through intestine commotions or foreign invasions, there do arise any detriment or dishonor to their commonwealth or yourselves, as far as you by your care and diligence can prevent. And as for the things that are before us, they shall, as soon as the other occasions will permit, receive a just and sufficient determination. And so we bid you farewell, and rest,

"Your very loving friend,

"OLIVER, P.

"*March* 29, 1655.

"To our trusty and well beloved the President, Assistants and inhabitants of Rhode-Island, together with Narragansett Bay, in New-England."

At the session of the Assembly, June 28, an act was passed, founded on the Protector's letter, in which it was enacted, that "if any person or persons be found, by the examination and judgment of the General Court of Commissioners, to be a ring-leader or ring-leaders of factions or divisions among us, he or they shall be sent over at his or their own charges, as prisoners, to receive his or their trial or sentence, at the pleasure of his Highness, and the Lords of his Council."

This act proves, that the Assembly, while they recognized the rights of conscience, were resolved to enforce civil obedience. It produced the desired effect. Mr. Coddington soon after signed a public declaration of his submission to the government of the colony, as now united, and he and Mr. Dyre subscribed, in the presence of Mr. Williams and others, an agreement, by which the long-standing feud between them was amicably settled. Mr. Harris, also, felt

the genial influence of the better spirit which now prevailed, and in the words of Mr. Backus, "cried up government and magistrates, as much as he had cried them down before."

In November, 1655, Mr. Williams wrote the following letter to the General Court of Massachusetts, in which he remonstrated, though in a courteous tone, against the disorders which still continued at Warwick and Pawtuxet, and which were countenanced, if not fomented, by Massachusetts. We learn from this letter, and from other sources, that the inhabitants of Rhode-Island were not allowed to procure arms and ammunition from Boston, though they were exposed to attacks from the savages, who were abundantly supplied from various quarters.* Mr. Williams modestly alludes to his sufferings, when he attempted to pass through Massachusetts, at his last embarkation for England. With all these causes of complaint, the mildness of this letter must be deemed a favorable evidence of a gentle and pacific temper. The solemn confession, that it might be better for Rhode-Island to be placed under the sway of Massachusetts, certainly does honor to his feelings, whatever may be thought of its wisdom:

"Copy of a letter from Mr. Roger Williams, President of Providence Plantations, to the General Court of Magistrates and Deputies assembled, at Boston.

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* Winthrop, vol. ii. p. 172, after stating, that an application from Newport, for powder and other ammunition was rejected, says, "it was an error, (in state policy at last) not to support them, for though they were desperately erroneous, and in such distractions among themselves as portended their ruin, yet, if the Indians should prevail against them, it would be a great advantage to the Indians and danger to the whole country." About the year 1655, Mr. Clarke sent over from England four barrels of powder, and eight of shot and bullets, which were consigned to Mr. Williams, and left, by order of the General Assembly, in his possession. While provision was thus made for defence against the Indians, measures were adopted to prevent hostilities. At a town meeting in Providence, June 24, 1655, at which Mr. Williams was moderator, it was voted, that if any person should sell a gallon of wine or spirits to an Indian, either directly or indirectly, he should forfeit six pounds, one half to the informer, and the other half to the town. Among the measures adopted for defence, was the following order, passed in town meeting, March 6, 1655-6: "Ordered, that liberty is given to as many as please to erect a fortification upon the Stamper's Hill, or about their own houses."

"*Providence*, 15, 9*mo*. 55, (*so called*.)

"Much honored Sirs,

"It is my humble and earnest petition unto God and you, that you may so be pleased to exercise command over your own spirits, that you may not mind myself nor the English of these parts (unworthy with myself of your eye) but only that face of equity (English and Christian) which I humbly hope may appear in these representations following.

"First, may it please you to remember, that concerning the town of Warwick, (in this colony) there lies a suit of £2000 damages against you before his Highness and the Lords of his Council; I doubt not, if you so please, but that (as Mr. Winslow and myself had well nigh ordered it) some gentlemen from yourselves and some from Warwick, deputed, may friendly and easily determine that affair between you.

"Secondly, the Indians which pretend your name at Warwick and Pawtuxet, (and yet live as barbarously, if not more than any in the country) please you to know their insolencies upon ourselves and cattle (unto £20 damages per annum) are insufferable by English spirits; and please you to give credence, that to all these they pretend your name, and affirm that they dare not (for offending you) agree with us, nor come to rules of righteous neighborhood, only they know you favor us not and therefore send us for redress unto you.

"Thirdly, concerning four English families at Pawtuxet, may it please you to remember that two controversies they have long (under your name) maintained with us, to a constant obstructing of all order and authority amongst us.

"To our complaint about our lands, they lately have professed a willingness to arbitrate, but to obey his Highness' authority in this charter, they say, they dare not for your sakes, though they live not by your laws, nor bear your common charges, nor ours, but evade both under color of your authority.

"Honored Sirs, I cordially profess it before the Most High, that I believe it, if not only they but ourselves and all the whole country, by joint consent, were subject to your government, it might be a rich mercy; but as things yet are, and since it pleased first the Parliament, and then the Lord

Admiral and Committee for Foreign Plantations, and since the Council of State, and lastly the Lord Protector and his Council, to continue us as a distinct colony, yea, and since it hath pleased yourselves, by public letters and references to us from your public courts, to own the authority of his Highness amongst us; be pleased to consider how unsuitable it is for yourselves (if these families at Pawtuxet plead truth) to be the obstructers of all orderly proceedings amongst us; for I humbly appeal to your own wisdom and experience, how unlikely it is for a people to be compelled to order and common charges, when others in their bosoms, are by such (seeming) partiality exempted from both.

"And, therefore, (lastly) be pleased to know, that there are (upon the point) but two families which are so obstructive and destructive to an equal proceeding of civil order amongst us; for one of these four families, Stephen Arnold, desires to be uniform with us; a second, Zacharie Rhodes, being in the way of dipping is (potentially) banished by you. Only William Arnold and William Carpenter, (very far, also, in religion, from you, if you knew all) they have some color, yet in a late conference, they all plead that all the obstacle is their offending of yourselves.

"Fourthly, whereas, (I humbly conceive) with the people of this colony your commerce is as great as with any in the country, and our dangers (being a frontier people to the barbarians) are greater than those of other colonies, and the ill consequences to yourselves would be not a few nor small, and to the whole land, were we first massacred or mastered by them. I pray your equal and favorable reflection upon that your law, which prohibits us to buy of you all means of our necessary defence of our lives and families, (yea in this most bloody and massacreing time.)

"We are informed that tickets have rarely been denied to any English of the country; yea, the barbarians (though notorious in lies) if they profess subjection, they are furnished; only ourselves, by former and later denial, seem to be devoted to the Indian shambles and massacres.

"The barbarians all the land over, are filled with artillery and ammunition from the Dutch, openly and horridly, and from all the English over the country, (by stealth.) I know they abound so wonderfully, that their activity and insolence is grown so high that they daily consult, and

hope, and threaten to render us slaves, as they long since (and now most horribly) have made the Dutch.

"For myself (as through God's goodness) I have refused the gain of thousands by such a murderous trade, and think no law yet extant, amongst yourselves or us, secure enough against such villany; so am I loth to see so many hundreds (if not some thousands) in this colony, destroyed like fools and beasts without resistance. I grieve that so much blood should cry against yourselves, yea, and I grieve that (at this instant by these ships) this cry and the premises should now trouble his Highness and his Council. For the seasonable preventing of which, is this humble address presented to your wisdom, by him who desires to be

"Your unfeigned and faithful servant,

"ROGER WILLIAMS,

"*Of Providence Plantations, President.*

"Hon. Sirs, since my letter, it comes into my heart to pray your leave to add a word as to myself, viz. at my last return from England I presented your then honored Governor, Mr. Bellingham, with an order of the Lords of the Council, for my free taking ship or landing at your ports, unto which it pleased Mr. Bellingham to send me his assent in writing; I humbly crave the recording of it by yourselves, lest forgetfulness hereafter, again put me upon such distresses as, God knows, I suffered when I last past through your colony to our native country."

The following letter to Mr. Winthrop, belongs to this period:

"To his much honored, kind friend, Mr. John Winthrop, at Pequod or elsewhere, these presents.

"*Providence*, 21, 12, 55–6, (*so called.*)

"Sir,

"This opportunity makes me venture this salutation, though we hear question of your being at Pequod. These friends can say more of affairs than I can write. I have letters from England of proceedings there, which yet are not come; some I have received, which tell me, that the Lord hath yet created peace, although the sword is yet forced (by garrisons) to enforce it. I cannot hear of open wars with France, but only with Spain, and that the prose-

cution of that West India expedition is still with all possible vigor on both sides intended. This diversion against the Spaniards hath turned the face and thoughts of many English; so that the saying of thousands now is, crown the Protector with gold, though the sullen yet cry, crown him with thorns. The former two or three years with plenty unthankfully received in England; the Lord sent abundance of waters this last summer, which spoiled their corn over most parts of the land. Sir Henry Vane being retired to his own private, in Lincolnshire, hath now published his observations as to religion; he hath sent me one of his books, (though yet at Boston.) His father is dead, and the inheritance falls to him, and 10 or 12,000 more than should if his father had lived but a month longer; but though his father cast him off, yet he hath not lost in temporals, by being cast off for God. Our acquaintance, Major Sedgwick, is said to be successor to unsuccessful Venables, cast into the tower. Your brother Stephen succeeds Major General Harrison. The Pope endeavors the uniting of all his slaves for his guard, fearing the heretics. The Lord knows whether Archer (upon the reign of Christ) said true, 'that yet the Pope, before his downfall, must recover England; and the protestant countries revolted from him.' Sir, we are sure all flesh is grass, and only the word of the Lord endures forever. Sir, you once kindly intended to quench a fire between Mr. Coddington and others, but now it is come to public trial. We hear the Dutch fire is not quenched. I fear this year will be stormy; only may the most gracious Lord by all drive and draw us to himself, in whom, Sir, I desire to be ever

"Yours, R. W."

The letter of November 15, to the General Court of Massachusetts, did not produce any favorable change in her measures. Mr. Williams afterwards wrote to the Governor, Mr. Endicott, who invited him to visit Boston. The following address to the General Court was prepared, in which some of the same topics are again touched:

"Copy of a letter from Providence Plantations to the General Court of the Massachusetts.

"*Providence*, 12, 3, 56, (*so called.*)

"May it please this much honored Assembly to remem-

ber, that, as an officer and in the name of Providence colony, I presented you with our humble requests before winter, unto which not receiving answer, I addressed myself this spring, to your much honored Governor, who was pleased to advise our sending of some of Providence to your Assembly.

"Honored Sirs, our first request (in short) was and is, for your favorable consideration of the long and lamentable condition of the town of Warwick, which hath been thus: they are so dangerously and so vexatiously intermingled with the barbarians, that I have long admired the wonderful power of God in restraining and preventing very great fires of mutual slaughters, breaking forth between them.

"Your wisdoms know the inhuman insultations of these wild creatures, and you may be pleased, also, to imagine, that they have not been sparing of your name as the patron of all their wickedness against our English men, women, and children, and cattle to the yearly damage of 60, 80 and 100 pounds.

"The remedy is (under God) only your pleasure, that Pumham shall come to an agreement with the town or colony, and that some convenient way and time be set for their removal.

"And that your wisdom may see just grounds for such your willingness, be pleased to be informed of a reality of a solemn covenant between this town of Warwick and Pumham, unto which, notwithstanding that he pleads his being drawn to it by the awe of his superior sachems, yet I humbly offer that what was done, was according to the law and tenor of the natives, (I take it) in all New-England and America, viz. that the inferior sachems and subjects shall plant and remove at the pleasure of the highest and supreme sachems, and I humbly conceive that it pleaseth the Most High and Only Wise to make use of such a bond of authority over them, without which, they could not long subsist in human society, in this wild condition wherein they are.

"2. Please you not to be insensible of the slippery and dangerous condition of this their intermingled cohabitation. I am humbly confident, that all the English towns and plantations in all New-England, put together, suffer not such molestation from the natives, as this one town and

people. It is so great and so oppressive, that I have daily feared the tidings of some public fire and mischief.

"3. Be pleased to review this copy from the Lord Admiral, and that this English town of Warwick should proceed, also that if any of yours were there planted, they should, by your authority, be removed. And we humbly conceive, that if the English (whose removes are difficult and chargeable) how much more these wild ones, who remove with little more trouble and damage than the wild beasts of the wilderness.

"4. Please you to be informed, that this small neck (wherein they keep and mingle fields with the English) is a very den of wickedness, where they not only practise the horrid barbarisms of all kind of whoredoms, idolatries, conjurations, but living without all exercise of actual authority, and getting store of liquors (to our grief) there is a confluence and rendezvous of all the wildest and most licentious natives and practices of the whole country.

"5. Beside satisfaction to Pumham and the former inhabitants of this neck, there is a competitor who must also be satisfied; another sachem, one Nawwushawsuck, who (living with Ousamaquin) lays claim to this place, and are at daily feud with Pumham (to my knowledge) about the title and lordship of it. Hostility is daily threatened.

"Our second request concerns two or three English families at Pawtuxet, who, before our charter, subjected themselves unto your jurisdiction. It is true, there are many grievances between many of the town of Providence and them, and these, I humbly conceive, may best be ordered to be composed by reference.

"But (2.) we have formerly made our addresses and now do, for your prudent removal of this great and long obstruction to all due order and regular proceedings among us, viz. the refusal of these families (pretending your name) to conform with us unto his Highness' authority amongst us.

"3. Your wisdom experimentally knows how apt men are to stumble at such an exemption from all duties and services, from all rates and charges, either with yourselves or us.

"4. This obstruction is so great and constant, that (without your prudent removal of it) it is impossible that either his Highness or yourselves can expect such satisfaction and observance from us as we desire to render.

"Lastly, as before, we promised satisfaction to the natives at Warwick, (and shall all possible ways endeavor their content) so we humbly offer, as to these our countrymen, First, as to grievances depending, that references may settle them. Secondly, for the future, the way will be open for their enjoyment of votes and privileges of choosing or being chosen, to any office in town or colony.

"Our third request is, for your favorable leave to us to buy of your merchants, four or more barrels of powder yearly, with some convenient proportion of artillery, considering our hazardous frontier situation to these barbarians, who, from their abundant supply of arms from the Dutch, (and perfidious English, all the land over) are full of our artillery, which hath rendered them exceedingly insolent, provoking and threatening, especially the inlanders, which have their supply from the fort of Aurania. We have been esteemed by some of you, as your thorny hedge on this side of you; if so, yet a hedge to be maintained; if as out sentinels, yet not to be discouraged. And if there be a jealousy of the ill use of such a favor, please you to be assured that a credible person in each town shall have the disposal and managing of such supplies, according to the true intent and purpose.

"For the obtaining of these, our just and necessary petitions, we have no inducement or hope from ourselves, only we pray you to remember, that the matters prayed, are no way dishonorable to yourselves, and we humbly conceive, do greatly promote the honor and pleasure of his Highness, yea, of the Most High, also; and lastly, such kindnesses will be obligations on us to study to declare ourselves, upon all occasions,

"Your most humble and faithful servants,

"ROGER WILLIAMS, *President.*

"In the name, and by the appointment, of Providence colony.

"Honored Gentlemen,

"I pray your patience to one word relating to myself, only. Whereas, upon an order from the Lords of his Highness' Council, for my future security in taking ships and landing in your ports, it pleased your honored then Governor, Mr. Bellingham, to obey that order under his own hand, I now pray the confirmation of it, from one word of this honored Court assembled."

A few days after, Mr. Williams addressed the following letter to the General Court. It bears the unwonted date of Boston, and it breathes a gratified feeling:

"Copy of a letter from Mr. Roger Williams, to the General Court.

"*Boston*, 17, 3, 56, (*so called.*)

"May it please this much honored Assembly,

"I do humbly hope, that your own breasts and the public, shall reap the fruit of your great gentleness and patience in these barbarous transactions, and I do cordially promise, for myself, (and all I can persuade with) to study gratitude and faithfulness to your service. I have debated with Pumham (and some of the natives helping with me) who shewed him the vexatious life he lives in, your great respect and care toward him, by which he may abundantly mend himself and be united in some convenience unto their neighborhood and your service. But I humbly conceive, in his case, that *dies et quies sanant hominem*, and he must have some longer breathing, for he tells me that the appearance of this competitor Nawwushawsuck, hath stabbed him. May you, therefore, please to grant him and me some longer time of conference, either until your next general assembling, or longer, at your pleasure.

"My other requests I shall not be importune to press on your great affairs, but shall make my address unto your Secretary, to receive, by him, your pleasure.

"Honored gentlemen,

"Your humble and thankful servant, R. W."

This year is made remarkable by the arrival at Boston, of several persons, of the new sect called Quakers.* They

* This religious society, says Hannah Adams, "began to be distinguished about the middle of the seventeenth century. Their doctrines were first promulgated in England, by George Fox, about the year 1647, for which he was imprisoned at Nottingham, in the year 1649, and the year following at Derby. The appellation of *Quakers*, was given them by way of contempt; some say, on account of their *tremblings* under the impression of divine things; but *they* say it was first given them by one of the magistrates, who committed George Fox to prison, on account of his bidding him and those about him to *tremble* at the word of the Lord." They have since called themselves Friends. The wild fanaticism of some of the early adherents of the sect, no more resembles the quiet demeanor of the pious Friends of the present day, than the policy of Massachusetts in 1656, was like the spirit of our own times.

were imprisoned and banished. The books which they brought with them were seized and burnt. Severe laws were enacted to exclude them from the Commonwealth. In October, 1656, (says Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 181,) "An act passed, laying a penalty of one hundred pounds upon the master of any vessel who should bring a known Quaker into any part of the colony, and requiring him to give security to carry them back again; that the Quaker should be immediately sent to the house of correction, and whipped twenty stripes, and afterwards kept to hard labor until transportation. They also laid a penalty of five pounds for importing, and the like for dispersing, Quaker books, and severe penalties for defending their heretical opinions. And the next year, an additional law was made, by which all persons were subjected to the penalty of forty shillings for every hour's entertainment given to any known Quaker; and any Quaker, after the first conviction, if a man, was to lose one ear, and the second time the other; a woman, each time to be severely whipped, and the third time, men or women, to have their tongues bored through with a red hot iron, and every Quaker, who should become such in the colony, was subjected to the like punishments. In May, 1658, a penalty of ten shillings was laid on every person present at a Quaker meeting, and five pounds upon every one speaking at such a meeting. Notwithstanding all this severity, the number of Quakers, as might well have been expected, increasing rather than diminishing, in October following, a further law was made for punishing with death all Quakers, who should return into the jurisdiction after banishment."

By this sanguinary law, which passed the Court by a majority of one vote only, four persons were afterwards executed, and a large number were imprisoned, whipped, fined and banished, until an order from the King, Charles II. in 1661, put an end to these proceedings. The conduct of some of these persons was scandalous,* and deserved

* "At Boston, one George Wilson, and at Cambridge, Elizabeth Horton, went crying through the streets, that the Lord was coming with fire and sword to plead with them. Thomas Newhouse went into the meeting-house at Boston with a couple of glass bottles, and broke them before the congregation, and threatened, 'Thus will the Lord break you in pieces.' Another time, M. Brewster came in with

punishment, as offences against civil order and decency; but nothing can justify the severity with which some of them were treated. The impolicy of persecution was fully displayed on this occasion; for the Quakers multiplied, in proportion as they were threatened and punished.

The other united colonies passed severe laws against the Quakers; and they endeavored to prevail on Rhode-Island to unite in this general persecution. But she remained true to her principles. The General Assembly, which met at Portsmouth, March 13, 1657, returned an answer to the commissioners of the united colonies, in which they held this language:

"Whereas freedom of different consciences to be protected from enforcements, was the principal ground of our charter, both with respect to our humble suit for it, as also to the true intent of the honorable and renowned Parliament of England, in granting of the same to us, which freedom we still prize, as the greatest happiness that men can possess in this world, therefore we shall, for the preservation of our civil peace and order, the more especially take notice that those people, and any others that are here, or shall come among us, be impartially required, and to our utmost constrained, to perform all civil duties requisite. And in case they refuse it, we resolve to make use of the first opportunity to inform our agent, residing in England."

The commissioners were not satisfied with this reply, and the next autumn they wrote again to the Assembly. An answer was returned, dated October 13, 1657, which, while it expresses disapprobation of the conduct of some of the Quakers, unfolds the Rhode-Island doctrine concerning liberty of conscience, and contains some excellent remarks on the good effects of toleration in allaying sectarian zeal:

"As concerning these Quakers (so called) which are now among us, we have no law among us whereby to punish any for only declaring by words, &c. their minds and understandings concerning the things and ways of God, as to salvation and an eternal condition. And we find, moreover, that in those places where these people, aforesaid, in

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her face besmeared, and as black as a coal. Deborah Wilson went through the streets of Salem, naked as she came into the world, for which she was well whipped."—Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 187.

this colony, are most of all suffered to declare themselves freely, and are only opposed by arguments in discourse, there they least of all desire to come; and we are informed, that they begin to loathe this place, for that they are not opposed by the civil authority, but with all patience and meekness are suffered to say over their pretended revelations and admonitions, nor are they like or able to gain many here to their way. And surely we find, that they delight to be persecuted by the civil powers, and when they are so, they are like to gain more by the conceit of their patient sufferings, than by consent to their pernicious sayings." The letter then expressed a belief, that their doctrines were dangerous to civil government, and promised, that at the next General Assembly, the subject should be considered, and proper measures adopted to prevent any "bad effects of their doctrines and endeavors."*

This letter was not suited to the prevailing opinions of that day. The other colonies were incensed by the inflexible adherence of Rhode-Island to the principles of her founder. The commissioners again wrote to the General Assembly, virtually requiring Rhode-Island to unite in a general persecution, under the penalty of being herself put under the ban of an excommunication from all commercial intercourse with the other colonies. This attempt to force Rhode-Island into measures subversive of her own institutions, and abhorrent to her feelings, was resisted as resolutely as were the threats of the British ministry by a subsequent generation. Rhode-Island adopted the only course then left to her. She appealed to the government in England, for protection, while she pursued her settled policy. The following letter to Mr. Clarke, the agent of the colony in England, throws much light on her condition and relations at that time. It was written by a Committee appointed by the General Assembly, at Warwick, November 5, 1658:†

"Worthy Sir, and trusty friend, Mr. Clarke,

"We have found, not only your ability and diligence,

* Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 454.—The letter is signed by Benedict Arnold, President; William Baulston, Randall Houlden, Arthur Fenner, and William Feild.

† Backus, vol. i. pp. 313–316.

but also your love and care to be such concerning the welfare and prosperity of this colony, since you have been intrusted with the more public affairs thereof, surpassing the no small benefit which we had of your presence here at home, that we in all straits and incumbrances, are emboldened to repair unto you, for further and continued care, counsel and help, finding that your solid and christian demeanor hath gotten no small interest in the hearts of our superiors, those noble and worthy senators, with whom you had to do in our behalf, as it hath constantly appeared in our addresses made unto them; we have by good and comfortable proofs found, having plentiful experience thereof. The last year we had laden you with much employment, which we were then put upon by reason of some too refractory among ourselves, wherein we appealed unto you for advice, for the more public manifestation of it, with respect to our superiors; but our intelligence fell short in that great loss of the ship, which we concluded here to be cast away. We have now a new occasion given us by an old spirit, with respect to the colonies round about us, who seem to be offended with us, because a sort of people, called by the name of Quakers, who are come amongst us, who have raised up divers who at present seem to be of their spirit, whereat the colonies about us seem to be offended with us, being the said people have their liberty with us, are entertained in our houses, or any of our assemblies; and for the present, we have found no just cause to charge them with the breach of the civil peace; only they are constantly going forth amongst them about us, and vex and trouble them about their religion and spiritual state, though they return with many a foul scar in their bodies for the same. And the offence our neighbors take against us, is because we take not some course against the said people, either to expel them from amongst us, or take such courses against them as themselves do, who are in fear lest their religion should be corrupted by them. Concerning which displeasure that they seem to take, it was expressed to us in a solemn letter, written by the commissioners of the united colonies at their sitting, as though they would either bring us in to act according to their scantling, or else take some course to do us a greater displeasure. A copy of which letter we have herewith sent unto you, wherein you may

perceive how they express themselves; as also we have herewith sent our present answer unto them, to give you what light we may in the matter. There is one clause in the letter, which plainly implies a threat, though courtly expressed, as their manner is; which we gather to be this, that themselves (as we construe it) have been much awed in point of subjection to the state of England, lest in case they should decline, England might prohibit all trade with them, both in point of exportation and importation of any commodities, which were a host sufficiently prevalent to subdue New England, not being able to subsist:—even so they seem to threaten us, by cutting us off from all commerce and trade with them, and thereby to disable us from any comfortable subsistence, being that the concourse of shipping, and all other sorts of commodities, are universally conversant among themselves; as also knowing that ourselves are not in a capacity to send out shipping of ourselves, which in great measure is occasioned *by their oppressing us*, as yourself well knows:—as in many other respects, so in this for one, that we cannot have any thing from them, for the supply of our necessities, but in effect they make the price, both of their commodities and our own. Also, because we have no English coin, but only that which passeth among these barbarians, and such commodities as are raised by the labor of our hands, as corn, cattle, tobacco, &c. to make payment in, which they will have at their own rates, or else not deal with us; whereby though they gain extraordinarily by us, yet, for the safeguard of their religion, they may seem to neglect themselves in that respect; for *what will not men do for their God?* Sir, this is our earnest and pressing request unto you in this matter, that as you may perceive by our answer unto the united colonies, we fly as our refuge in all civil respects to his Highness and honorable Council, as not being subject to any other in matters of our civil state, so may it please you to have an eye and ear open, in case our adversaries should speak, to undermine us in our privileges granted unto us, and plead our cause in such sort, as that we may not be compelled to exercise any civil power over men's consciences, so long as human orders in point of civility are not corrupted and violated, which our neighbors about us do frequently practise, whereof many of us have

absolute experience, and judge it to be no less than a point of ABSOLUTE CRUELTY.

"JOHN SANFORD,
Clerk of Assembly."

The concluding sentences of this letter are worthy of special note, as showing, that the rulers of Rhode-Island carefully distinguished between the rights of conscience and the duty of obedience to the laws which guard the civil peace. They permitted no disorderly license, and if any persons had been guilty, in Rhode-Island, of the acts which some individuals, calling themselves Quakers, practised in Massachusetts, they would have been punished. Mr. Williams, in his subsequent controversy with George Fox, expressed his approbation of the punishment of certain females in Massachusetts, for their shameless conduct, affirming it to be a perversion of terms to call the punishment of such actions, persecution.

We must now return to Mr. Williams. He held the office of President two years. On the 1st of February, 1657–8, he issued a warrant against Mr. William Harris, for the alleged crime of opposing the Protector's government. The warrant ordered his arrest and imprisonment, for the purpose of sending him to England, in accordance, probably, with the act of June, 1655. How far this strong measure was deserved by the conduct of Mr. Harris, we cannot now determine.* It has been inferred that it was not sustained by public opinion, because, at the next election, Mr. Williams was superseded, as President, by Mr. Benedict Arnold. It is not improbable, that he was urged too far, by zeal to uphold the charter and the Protector's authority, and perhaps by personal hostility towards Mr. Harris, between whom and himself there was, for many

* In his "George Fox digged out of his Burrowes," (p. 20,) Mr. Williams says of Mr. Harris, his "facts and courses others (of no small authority and prudence among us, with whom I advised) saw to be desperate high treason against the laws of our mother England, and of the colony also." He then inquires, "was it my fury (as you call it) or was it not honesty and duty to God and the colony, and the higher powers then in England, to act faithfully and impartially in the place wherein I then stood sentinel?"

years, a very acrimonious feud.* There is, however, no very conclusive evidence, that Mr. Williams' conduct, in this case, was generally disapproved. He occupied a seat in the General Assembly, at intervals, for several years, both as an assistant, and as a representative from Providence. He was often chosen on important committees, and he continued, till his death, to serve the public, in various ways, with ability and patriotic zeal.†

* The origin of this unhappy quarrel is unknown. There were, probably, faults on both sides. They both used very angry and unjustifiable language towards each other. It appears that Mr. Williams so disliked Mr. Harris, that he would not write his name at length, but abbreviated it thus, "W. Har:" This mode of writing it is seen in the fac simile prefixed to this volume. It seems evident, that Mr. Harris had, for some cause, a remarkable aptitude to get into difficulties. A letter of the town of Providence, to the "Honored Governor and Council at Newport on Rhode-Island," dated August 31, 1668, and signed "Shadrach Manton, town clerk," accuses him of turbulent conduct. In 1667, there was a great disturbance at Providence, excited, as it appears, by him. Two town meetings were held, and two sets of deputies chosen to the General Assembly, among whom was Mr. Harris. He was, however, expelled from the General Assembly, and fined fifty pounds, which fine was remitted the next year.—Backus, vol. i. p. 457. We may hope, that Mr. Harris, though he doubtless had faults, was less culpable, than his contemporaries thought him. It was an unquiet time, and few public men escaped censure.

† In the records of the town of Providence, is the following act: "June 2, 1657. Ordered, that Mr. Roger Williams be accommodated with two acres and a half of land amongst the rest of the neighbors, at the further Bailey's Cove, he laying down land equivalent to it, in the judgment of the town deputies."

CHAPTER XXII.

Death of Cromwell—his character—Richard Cromwell succeeds—Restoration of Charles II.—Act of Uniformity, and ejection of the Non-conformists—Affairs in Rhode-Island—Indian deed—letters to Mr. Winthrop.

The Protector Cromwell died in September, 1658. This wonderful man raised himself, from a private station, to the supreme power, and fulfilled his high functions with an ability and energy, which few occupants of a throne have ever displayed. He has shared the usual fate of those men, whose conduct and principles have placed them apart from the mass of mankind. No other man was ever in a position, which exposed him to the hatred and misrepresentation of so many parties. The royalists heaped on him unmeasured obloquy as a usurper. The High Church party denounced him as a foe to the hierarchy. The Presbyterians disliked and opposed him, as a friend of toleration. The ultra-republicans reproached him for his ambition, because he did not think England, in her existing condition, to be capable of a free republican government, and therefore retained in his hands the power which he believed to be indispensable to the peace of the state. The irreligious, of all parties, scoffed at him as a hypocrite and a fanatic, though the charge is somewhat inconsistent with itself.*

That Cromwell had faults, may be freely acknowledged,

* Pope (Essay on Man, Ep. iv. l. 284,) has aided in confirming the prejudice against Cromwell, by his famous line :

"See Cromwell damned to everlasting fame."

Pope sometimes sacrificed truth to a brilliant couplet. The two lines which immediately precede the one just quoted are a specimen :

"If parts allure thee, think how Bacon shined,
"The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind."

Public opinion now does not sustain the poet, in stigmatizing the great Bacon as the "meanest of mankind," but views him as more sinned against than sinning. We may learn from these examples, how great is the responsibleness of popular authors. By a single line they may perpetuate calumny. They may poison the wells of knowledge.

by his warmest friends. That his course was always wise and justifiable, cannot be maintained; but it may be doubted, whether, if the circumstances of that stormy and critical period in which he lived were fairly weighed, and his character and conduct were sifted, with a candid spirit, it would not be found, that Cromwell deserves more of the applause of the friends of liberty and religion, than of their censures. It is certain, that his accusers yield to him the praise of qualities, which it is difficult to reconcile with the crimes that they impute to him.

It is surprising to hear, from American writers, reproaches against Cromwell as a "usurper."* This language is not strange from the lips of a royalist, or a High Church partisan, in England; but from an American, it is inconsistent, and unworthy of his position as a citizen of a great and free country, where public opinion ought to be decisively and steadily in favor of republican principles, and ought thus to form an august tribunal, whose verdict should be felt and respected throughout the earth.

An American, surely, can feel no respect for hereditary titles. In his view, Cromwell would have had a clear right to the throne, if the people had chosen to give him the crown; and there is quite as much evidence, that the great body of the people of England were satisfied with the government of Cromwell, as that they were content with that of Charles II. If by usurpation is meant a violation of the Constitution, it may be replied, that the Constitution was already broken. The King had trampled on it, and the Long Parliament had governed the kingdom for years with an entire disregard of the Constitution. The country was in a state of anarchy, and it was a blessing to England that Cromwell seized the reins, and controlled the fierce parties who convulsed the nation. Napoleon, though his subsequent course was unjustifiable, did a good service to France, when he overthrew the detestable

* Examples might be cited, of language like this, in American authors. They show the effect of a discreditable deference to foreign writers. But all American authors are not disposed to echo the infidel and tory opinions of England. Dr. Stiles, in his History of the Judges, defended Cromwell; and a writer in the Christian Spectator, for September, 1829, has vindicated the character of the Protector, with ability and eloquence.

demagogues who had deluged her with blood. If our peerless Washington had found this country, in 1784, in the condition in which England was in 1653, and France in 1800, it would have been his duty, as a patriot and a philanthropist, to employ the power at his control for the preservation of order, and the restoration of public happiness.

It is certain, that the great ends of government,—peace and prosperity at home and respect abroad,—were enjoyed under Cromwell's sway, to a far higher degree than they were under most of the British monarchs, preceding the revolution. Even Hume, who was an infidel and a tory, and of course hated Cromwell, acknowledges, that the distracted state of England, and the mutual rancor of its various factions, rendered an energetic government indispensable, and would have furnished a reasonable excuse for what he calls the "temporary usurpation" of Cromwell, if the Protector had been guilty of no other crime.* The excellent Baxter, who carried his loyalty to the preposterous length of opposing Cromwell, under whom he enjoyed perfect toleration, and striving to restore the "legitimate" King, with the almost certain prospect of being persecuted and silenced, confesses, that religion flourished, under the Protector, in a degree before unknown. "I do not believe," he says,† "that ever England had so able and faithful a ministry since it was a nation, as it hath at this day; and I fear, that few nations on earth, if any, have the like. Sure I am, the change is so great, within these twelve years, that it is one of the greatest joys that ever I had in the world to behold it. O how many congregations are now plainly and frequently taught, that lived then in great obscurity. How many able, faithful men are there now in a county, in comparison of what were then." And yet Baxter labored and prayed for the restoration of Charles, under whom Baxter himself and two thousand more of these faithful ministers were speedily silenced.

Cromwell has been accused of hypocrisy, but this charge, especially when made by such men as Hume, is unworthy of credit. Baxter, who was a good judge of piety, does not accuse Cromwell of hypocrisy, but acknowledges that he was a pious man, though misled by ambition. "Both piety

* History of England, chapter lxi.
† Works, Orme's edition, vol. i. p. 153.

and ambition," he says, "concurred in countenancing all whom he thought godly, of what sect soever. Piety pleaded for them as godly, and charity as men, and ambition secretly told him what use he might make of them. He meant well in all this at the beginning, and thought he did all for the safety of the godly, and the public good, but not without an eye to himself."* As to his ambition, he probably had a sufficient share of it; but he refused the crown when it was urged on him, with many plausible arguments, by Parliament, and when, as Hume intimates, a large part of the nation would have acquiesced. His personal and domestic habits are acknowledged, by all parties, to have been pure and amiable. His court was perhaps the most moral and decorous, that England has ever seen.

The Protector was a friend of toleration, and this single trait in his character is sufficient to entitle his memory to respect. He was not entirely consistent, it is true, but no public man, at that day, except Roger Williams, was so. Cromwell was surrounded with difficulties; and the "Instrument of Government," under which he held the Protectorship, excluded Episcopalians and Catholics from the enjoyment of that religious liberty which it granted to all others.† But the spirit of the Protector was more tolerant than the laws, and he often connived at the meetings of the Episcopalians. A man, who, at that time, and in his post, could act, so far as he did, on the principle of an equitable toleration of all religious opinions, could not have been either a fanatic or a despot.‡

* Works, vol. i. p. 149. † Neal, vol. iv. p. 101.

‡ The Protector's exertions to relieve and protect the unhappy Waldenses, who were at that time suffering a merciless persecution, claim for him the gratitude of every friend of religion and liberty. He appointed a day of national humiliation and prayer throughout all England and Wales, and ordered that a collection should be made in all the houses of worship, for the relief of the sufferers. He himself headed a subscription, with the liberal donation of two thousand pounds, and in a short time the large sum of nearly forty thousand pounds was raised and transmitted. Not contented with this measure, he sent letters to the Duke of Savoy, the inhuman persecutor, and to several of the princes of Europe, for the purpose of procuring deliverance for the miserable remnants of the Waldenses. The potent voice of the formidable Protector, which none of the monarchs of that day ventured to despise, uttered, as it was, by the

Roger Williams was a friend of Cromwell. It has been supposed, that he was allied to him by birth. He was certainly drawn to him by a communion of spirit, on the sub- of religious liberty. In his letters, he repeatedly alludes to familiar conversations with Cromwell. The friendship of Milton and Roger Williams may be viewed as an honorable testimony to the character of the Protector. It is difficult to believe, that these men would have yielded their confidence and esteem to a hypocrite, either in religion or in politics. It is not more easy to believe, that such a man as Cromwell has been described, would have admitted men so sagacious and upright as Milton and Williams, to a close scrutiny of his actions, or that by all the cunning which has been ascribed to him he could have deceived them.

These three men, in fact, resembled each other, in their character, in their opinions, and in the treatment which they received. Each was misunderstood; each has suffered obloquy, and each is receiving, from the calm and enlightened judgment of the present age, that just sentence, which, sooner or later, will reward him, who aims to advance the happiness of men, and who perseveres, through evil and good report, in upholding the persecuted cause of truth and freedom.*

Cromwell was quietly succeeded, as Protector, by his son Richard, a proof, that the nation were not very much

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powerful pen of Milton, the Latin Secretary, had some effect, though less than he hoped, to soften the rage of bigotry and persecution. The following sonnet was written by Milton on this occasion:

"*On the late Massacre in Piedmont.*

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains, cold;
E'en them, who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worship'd stocks and stones,
Forget not; in thy book record their groans,
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese, that roll'd
Mother and infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To Heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all th' Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred fold, who, having learned thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe."

* Judging from the rapid progress of free principles in England,

dissatisfied with Cromwell's sway. But Richard possessed neither the talents, nor the ambition of his father.* The aspiring and factious men whom Oliver held in check, soon forced his son to retire from his burthensome and difficult office. A stormy period succeeded, during which the rival parties struggled for victory. At length, General Monk, obtaining the command of a powerful army, restored the King, Charles II. who entered London in triumph, May 29, 1660. The nation received him with apparent joy, being weary of the disorders which preceded and followed the energetic government of Cromwell. The royalists, among whom were the Episcopalians, welcomed the King with delight. The Presbyterians, who had disliked Cromwell, were also zealous in restoring Charles, with the expectation that their system would be continued as the national religion. They were so eager to merit the gratitude of the King, that they exacted of him no conditions, but were satisfied with the assurance, that he would grant liberty to all *tender consciences;* a promise, which he after

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it would not be surprising if Cromwell should, ere long, be recognised as one of the great leaders in the struggle for freedom. Mr. Ivirney, in his life of Milton, (p. 131,) says of Cromwell, "for whose statue I venture to bespeak a niche among the illustrious dead in Westminster Abbey; not doubting, from recent events, but the time will come, when the governors of the nation will be so sensible of the obligations of Britain to that illustrious ruler and his noble compatriots, as maugre the mean power of ignorance and prejudice, will decree him a monumental inscription in the sepulchres of our kings."

* The colony of Rhode-Island adopted an address to Richard Cromwell, of which the following is an extract. The address was never presented:

"May it please your Highness to know, that this poor colony of Providence Plantations, mostly consists of a birth and breeding of the Providence of the Most High, we being an outcast people, formerly from our mother nation, in the bishops' days, and since from the New-English over-zealous colonies; our whole frame being like unto the present frame and constitution of our dearest mother England; bearing with the several judgments and consciences each of other in all the towns of our colony, which our neighbor colonies do not, which is the only cause of their great offence against us. Sir, we dare not interrupt your high affairs with the particulars of our wilderness condition, only beg your eye of favor to be cast upon our faithful Agent, Mr. John Clarke, and unto what humble addresses he shall at any time present your Highness with in our behalf."—Backus, vol. i. pp. 316–17.

wards found it very easy to violate, by insisting, that all consciences which did not agree with his views, were not tender, but criminally obstinate. The efforts of the Presbyterians to obtain a compromise with the Episcopalians, by which they might be comprehended in the Established Church, failed.* The bishops would not consent to any alterations of the liturgy. The Presbyterians would not listen to the King's proposition of toleration to other denominations, by which he meant to favor the Papists, but which the Presbyterians rejected, more from a dread of Popery, we may hope, than from their general aversion to toleration. The Act of Uniformity was passed, and took effect, August 24, 1662. Two thousand of the best ministers in England were ejected from their livings, because they could not submit to the rigorous requirements of the act. Dreadful distress to them and to their families was the natural consequence. The interests of religion suffered incalculable injury, by the loss of these ministers, and by the character of many of their successors.

King Charles II. was proclaimed in Rhode-Island, October 19, 1660. A new commission was sent to Mr. Clarke, and he continued his exertions to procure a new charter for the colony. Various sums of money were voted, at different times, to be sent to Mr. Clarke.†

At Providence, there seems to have been a spirit among some of the inhabitants, which disturbed the peace of Mr. Williams. Whether they were envious of his influence, or impatient under the restraints which he steadily advo-

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* An interesting account of the fruitless endeavors of the Presbyterians to effect this object, is given in Orme's Life of Baxter, chapter vii.

† August 23, 1659, a rate of fifty pounds was voted for his use, of which Newport was to pay twenty, Providence eleven, Portsmouth ten, and Warwick nine. May 21, 1661, two hundred pounds sterling were voted, of which Newport was to pay eighty-five, Providence forty, Portsmouth forty, and Warwick thirty-five. Subsequent appropriations, to the amount of three hundred and six pounds, are found on the records. The relative size of the towns may be inferred from the above apportionment. Newport was more than twice as large as Providence. A record of the names of the freemen in the several towns in 1655, states the numbers thus: Newport, eighty-three; Portsmouth, fifty-two; Providence, forty-two; Warwick, thirty-eight, —total, two hundred and fifteen

cated, with the whole weight of his authority, does not now appear. But it is certain, that parties were formed, which, for many years, greatly interrupted the tranquillity of the town; and it was thought necessary, in 1669, to send a Committee of the General Assembly, to settle the difficulties. The boundaries of the town were a fruitful cause of contention, and involved the inhabitants in disputes, which were not adjusted till long after the death of Mr. Williams and of most of his contemporaries. He complains, in a letter, dated July, 1669, that they had "four sorts of bounds at least." He says: "some (that never did this town nor colony good, and it is feared never will) cried out, when Roger Williams had laid himself down as a stone in the dust for after comers to step on in town and colony, *Who is Roger Williams?* We know the Indians and the sachems as well as he. We will trust Roger Williams no longer. We will have our bounds confirmed us under the sachems' hands before us."*

In August, 1659, the following deed was procured from the Narraganset sachems:

"Deed of Scattape and Quoquagunewett, son of Mexham, son of Qunnouone, called by the English Canonicus, uncle to Miantinomo, who made a league of peace with the English in the Massachusetts, for all the Indians in these parts, in the time of the Pequod war with the English, this our grandfather and cousin, these sachems, granted to Roger Williams, agent for the men of Providence and the men of Pawtuxet, a tract of land, reaching from Pawtucket river to Pawtuxet river. All the lands between the streams of those rivers, and up these streams without limits, for their use of cattle, did they grant to the men aforesaid, the men of Providence and the men of Pawtuxet:— to whom we establish the lands aforesaid, up the streams of those rivers, and confirm, without limit, or as far as the men abovesaid, of Providence and of Pawtuxet, shall judge convenient for their use of cattle, as feeding, ploughing, planting all manner of plantations whatsoever; we say, all the lands, according to the limits abovesaid, we establish and confirm to the men of Providence and the men of

* R. I. Lit. Rep. for March, 1815, p. 638.

Pawtuxet, according to their joint agreement, in the most absolute tenure of fee simple, to them, their heirs and assigns forever. And hereby bind ourselves, our heirs and assigns, not to molest or trouble the men abovesaid, in the full enjoyment of the land abovesaid. Nevertheless, it shall not be lawful for the men abovesaid to remove the Indians that are up in the country, from their fields, without the Indians' content and consent; nor shall it be lawful for any of those Indians to sell any of the lands abovesaid to any, only it shall be lawful for them to take of the men of Providence and the men of Pawtuxet, according to their joint agreements, satisfaction for their removing. And, as we have established to the men abovesaid the land and deed granted by our grandfather and cousin, so do we now, also, confirm the grant of confirmation by our cousin, Cursackquanth, Caufanequanutte, and Kenerselath.

"Dated this first day of December, 1659.

"The mark of (*a tomahawk*) SCUTTAPE,
"The mark of (*bow and arrow*) QUOQUAGUNEWETT.

"Signed and delivered, in presence of
NAUTEMOREAW, — his mark,
RICHARD SMITH,
RICHARD SMITH, JR.
JAMES SMITH,
WILLIAM DYRE.

"Richard Smith, and Richard Smith, jun. swore, that this deed was explained before it was signed." April 28, 1660, Acaquaomitt, son of Quoquagunewett, confirmed the preceding deed.

This deed was, it appears, written by Mr. William Harris. This fact accounts for its phraseology. It was asserted by Mr. Williams and others, that the sachems did not understand its full import, when they signed it. It was procured on the ground, that Mr. Williams' deed from the sachems conveyed a life estate only to him, and consequently his deed to the purchasers could convey no other title. This deed, also, greatly extended the original bounds, and thus gratified those who had contended, that the phrase "up streams without limits," in the sachems' deed to Mr. Williams, gave a title to the lands

lying along the rivers Pawtuxet and Pawtucket, up to their sources. This construction was always resisted by Roger Williams, as false, and as injurious to the natives. The new deed was disapproved by himself and others.* It appears to have been procured in no friendly spirit towards himself. It implied that he had acted improperly, in taking the deed in his own name, and it calls him the "agent of the men of Providence and the men of Pawtuxet." But it has, we trust, been satisfactorily shown, in preceding pages, that Mr. Williams was the rightful proprietor of the original grant, and was under no obligation to divide the land among his fellow-colonists.

The following letters to Mr. Winthrop, touch on several interesting topics:

"To my honored, kind friend, Mr. John Winthrop, Governor, at Hartford, on Connecticut.

"*Providence*, 6, 12, 59–60.

"Sir,

"Loving respects to yourself and Mrs. Winthrop, &c. Your loving lines in this cold, dead season, were as a cup of your Connecticut cider, which we are glad to hear abounds with you, or of that western metheglin, which you

* A document exists, purporting to be an act of the town, with a preface, signed by Gregory Dexter, and entitled "An instrument, or sovereign plaster, to heal the manifold sores in this town or plantation of Providence, which do arise about lands." This document says: "1st. That act, to divide to the men of Pawtuxet twenty miles, is hereby declared against as unjust and unreasonable, not being healthful, but hurtful. 2. Whereas great and manifold troubles have befallen both ourselves and the whole colony, by reason of that phrase, "up streams without limits, we might have for the use of our cattle," for preventing future contention, we declare that our bounds are limited in our town evidences, and by us stated, about twenty years since, and known to be the river and fields of Pawtucket, Sugar Loaf Hill, Bewett's Brow, Observation Rock, Absolute Swamp, Oxford and Hipe's Rock. **** No other privilege, by virtue of the said phrase, to be challenged by this town, viz. that if the cattle went beyond the bounds prefixed in the said deed granted to him, [Mr. Williams] then the owners of the cattle should be no trespassers, the cattle going so far in one day to feed as they might come home at night. 3. And whereas some of us have desired of the colony leave to purchase for this town some enlargement, which was granted, and by the great diligence of our said neighbor, Williams, with the natives, more land is bought, adjoining your said bounds," &c.

and I have drunk at Bristol together, &c. Indeed, it is the wonderful power and goodness of God, that we are preserved in our dispersions among these wild, barbarous wretches. I hear not of their excursions this winter, and should rejoice if, as you hint, Uncas and his brother were removed to Long-Island, or any where, or else, as I have sometimes motioned, a truce for some good term of years might be obtained amongst them. But how should we expect that the streams of blood should stop among the dregs of mankind, when the bloody issues flow so fresh and fearfully among the finest and most refined sons of men and sons of God. We have not only heard of the four northern nations, Dania, Swedia, Anglia, and Belgium, all Protestants, (heretics and dogs, with the Pope, &c.) last year tearing and devouring one another, in the narrow straits and eminent high passages and turns of the sea and world ; but we also have a sound of the Presbyterians' rage new burst out into flames of war from Scotland, and the independent and sectarian army provoked again to new appeals to God, and engagements against them. Thus, while this last Pope hath plied with sails and oars, and brought all his popish sons to peace, except Portugal, and brought in his grand engineers, the Jesuits, again to Venice, after their long just banishment, we Protestants are wofully disposed to row backward, and bring our sails aback-stays, and provoke the holy, jealous Lord, who is a consuming fire, to kindle again those fires from Rome and hell, which formerly consumed (in Protestant countries) so many precious servants of God. The late renowned Oliver confessed to me, in close discourse about the Protestants' affairs, &c. that he yet feared great persecutions to the Protestants from the Romanists, before the downfall of the Papacy. The histories of our fathers before us, tell us what huge bowls of the blood of the saints that great whore hath been drunk with, in (now) Protestant dominions. Sure her judgment will ring through the world, and it is hoped it is not far from the door. Sir, you were, not long since, the son of two noble fathers, Mr. John Winthrop and Mr. H. Peters. It is said they are both extinguished. Surely, I did ever, from my soul, honor and love them even when their judgments led them to afflict me. Ye the Father of Spirits spares us breath, and I rejoice, Sir

that your name (amongst the New-England magistrates printed, to the Parliament and army, by H. Nort. Rous, &c.) is not blurred, but rather honored, for your prudent and moderate hand in the late Quakers' trials amongst us. And it is said, that in the late Parliament, yourself were one of the three in nomination for General Governor over New-England, which however that design ripened not, yet your name keeps up a high esteem, &c. I have seen your hand to a letter to this colony, as to your late purchase of some land at Narraganset.* The sight of your hand hath quieted some jealousies amongst us, that the Bay, by this purchase, designed some prejudice to the liberty of conscience amongst us. We are in consultations how to answer that letter, and my endeavor shall be, with God's help, to welcome, with both our hands and arms, your interest in these parts, though we have no hope to enjoy your personal residence amongst us. I rejoice to hear that you gain, by new plantations, upon this wilderness. I fear that many precious souls will be glad to hide their heads, shortly, in these parts. Your candle and mine draws towards its end. The Lord graciously help us to shine in light and love universally, to all that fear his name, without that monopoly of the affection to such of our own persuasion only; for the common enemy, the Romish wolf, is very high in resolution, and hope, and advantage to make a prey on all, of all sorts, that desire to fear God. Divers of our neighbors thankfully re-salute you We have buried, this winter, Mr. Olney's son, whom, formerly, you heard to be afflicted with a lethargy. He lay two or three days wholly senseless, until his last groans. My youngest son, Joseph, was troubled with a spice of an epilepsy. We used some remedies, but it hath pleased God, by his taking of tobacco,

* In 1659, Mr. John Winthrop, Major Humphrey Atherton, and associates, purchased of the Narraganset sachems two tracts of land, joining to the Bay, one lying to the southward of Mr. Smith's trading-house, and the other to the northward of it, and settled it with inhabitants. 1 His. Col. v. p. 217.

In 1657, Mr. William Coddington and Mr. Benedict Arnold purchased, of the same sachems, the island Canonicut, which, in 1678, was incorporated as a township, by the name of Jamestown. Ibid.

In the same year, Mr. John Hull, Mr. John Porter, and three persons more, purchased a large tract of land, in the southern parts of the Narraganset country, and called Petaquamscut Purchase. Ibid.

perfectly, as we hope, to cure him. Good Mr. Parker, of Boston, passing from Prudence Island, at his coming on shore, on Seekonk land, trod awry upon a stone or stick, and fell down, and broke the small bone of his leg. He hath lain by of it all this winter, and the last week was carried to Boston in a horse litter. Some fears there were of a gangrene. But, Sir, I use too much boldness and prolixity. I shall now only subscribe myself,

"Your unworthy friend,

"R. W.

"Sir, my loving respects to Mr. Stone, Mr. Lord, Mr. Allen, Mr. Webster, and other loving friends."

"To my honored, kind friend, Mr. Winthrop, Governor of Connecticut, these presents.

"*Providence*, 8, 7, 60 (*so called.*)

"Sir,

"A sudden warning gives me but time of this abrupt salutation to your kind self and Mrs. Winthrop, wishing you peace. I promised to a neighbor, a former servant of your father's, (Joshua Windsor,) to write a line, on his behalf, and at his desire, unto you. His prayer to you is, that when you travel toward Boston, you would please to come by Providence, and spare one hour to heal an old sore,—a controversy between him and most of his neighbors, in which, I am apt to think, he hath suffered some wrong. He hath promised to submit to your sentence. His opposite, one James Ashton, being desired by me to nominate also, he resolves also to submit to your sentence, which will concern more will and stomach than damage; for the matter only concerns a few poles of ground, wherein Joshua hath cried out of wrong these many years. I hope, Sir, the blessed Lord will make you a blessed instrument of chiding the winds and seas; and I shall rejoice in your presence amongst us. There are greater ulcers in my thoughts at present, which, I fear, are incurable, and that it hath pleased the Most Wise and Most High to pass an irrevocable sentence of amputations and cauterizations upon the poor Protestant party. The clouds gather mighty fast and thick upon our heads from all the Popish quarters. It hath pleased the Lord to glad the Romish conclave with he departure of those two mighty bulwarks of the Protes-

tants, Oliver and Gustavus; to unite, (I think by this time) all the Catholic kings and princes, for Portugal was like, very like, of late, to return to the yoke of Spain, whose treasure from the Indies it hath pleased God to send home, so wonderfully great and rich this year, that I cannot but fear the Lord hath some mighty work to effect with it. We know the Catholic King was in debt, but he now overflows with millions, which God is most like to expend against the Protestants or the Turks, the two great enemies, (the sword-fish and the thrasher) against the Popish leviathan. The Presbyterian party in England and Scotland is yet very likely to make some struggle against the Popish invasions; and yet in the end I fear (as long I have feared, and long since told Oliver, to which he much inclined,) the bloody whore is not yet drunk enough with the blood of the saints and witnesses of Jesus. One cordial is, (amongst so many the merciful Lord hath provided) that that whore will shortly appear so extremely loathsome, in her drunkenness, bestialities, &c. that her bewitched paramours will tear her flesh, and burn her with fire unquenchable. Here is a sound that Fairfax, and about two hundred of the House with him, differ with the King. The merciful Lord fit us to hear and feel more. It is a very thick and dreadful mist and swamp, with which the Lord hath a great while suffered us to labor in, as hoping to wade out, break through, and escape shipwreck. In Richard Protector's Parliament, they fell into three factions presently: royalists, protectorians, (which were most Presbyterian, and earned it,) and commonwealth's men. The Presbyterians, when General Monk brought in the secluded members, carried it again, of late, clearly, and so vigorously against the Papists, that stricter laws than ever. There must surely, then, be great flames, before the King can accomplish his engagements to the Popish party.

"You know well, Sir, at sea, the first entertainment of a storm is with, down with top-sails. The Lord mercifully help us to lower, and make us truly more and more low, humble, contented, thankful for the least crumbs of mercy. But the storm increaseth, and trying with our mainsails and mizzens will not do. We must, therefore, humbly beg patience from the Father of Lights and God of all mercies,

to lay at Hull, in hope. It was a motto in one of the late Parliaments: cornets, under a shower of blood 'Transibit.'

"Sir, my neighbor, Mrs. Scott, is come from England; and, what the whip at Boston could not do, converse with friends in England, and their arguments, have, in a great measure drawn her from the Quakers, and wholly from their meetings. Try the spirits. There are many abroad, and must be, but the Lord will be glorious, in plucking up whatever his holy hand hath not planted. My brother runs strongly to Origen's notion of universal mercy at last, against an eternal sentence. Our times will call upon us for thorough discussions. The fire is like to try us. It is a wonderful mercy the barbarians are yet so quiet. A portion of our neighbors are just now come home, *re infecta*. The Mohegans would not sally, and the Narragansets would not spoil the corn, for fear of offending the English. The Lord mercifully guide the councils of the commissioners. Mr. Arnold, Mr. Brenton, and others, struggle against your interest at Narraganset; but I hope your presence might do much good amongst us in a few days.

"Sir, I am, unworthy, yours,

"R. W."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Infant baptism—half-way covenant—laws to support religion—charter from Charles II.—first meeting of Assembly—Mr. Clarke—difficulties about boundaries—charges against Rhode-Island, concerning Catholics and Quakers.

It may be useful to look, for a moment, at the difficulties which arose, about this time, in the other colonies, respecting infant baptism. This rite had been hitherto administered to those children, whose immediate parents were both members of a church. But as the country increased, many persons, who were not members of a church, had children, for whom, nevertheless, they desired baptism. The question accordingly arose, whether the children of such parents could properly be admitted to baptism. It was, on the one hand, a departure from the principle, that as faith is required in the Scriptures as a prerequisite to baptism, and as the infant could not exercise faith, it must consequently be baptized on the ground of its parents' faith. It seemed hard, on the other hand, that if there was any virtue in infant baptism, the innocent child should be deprived of it, because its parents were not pious. The question began to be publicly agitated. The magistrates of Connecticut, about the year 1656, sent several queries on the subject to the magistrates of Massachusetts.* A meeting of ministers was held in Boston, June 4, 1657, at which the "half-way covenant," as it was called, was adopted. "It provided, that all persons of sober life and correct sentiments, without being examined as to a change of heart, might profess religion, or become members of the church, and have their children baptized, though they did not come to the Lord's table."† This disastrous departure from the Scriptures, and from the former practice of the churches, was not unanimously adopted. Many ministers and churches were opposed to it. A synod was held, in

* Hubbard, chap. lxiv.

† Hawes' Tribute to the Memory of the Pilgrims, p. 149.

Boston, in September, 1662, including all the ministers in Massachusetts. This body ratified the decision of the council of 1657. But parties were immediately formed, for and against the synod. The Rev. Charles Chauncey, President of Harvard College, and the Rev. Increase Mather, wrote against the decision, while others wrote on the opposite side. The country was thrown into a ferment. A division took place in the First Church in Boston, and the Old South Church was formed in May, 1669, by a minority of the First Church, the majority of whose members opposed the decision of the synod, while the seceding minority approved it. The General Court took up the subject, and at its session, in May, 1670, pronounced the formation of the new church to be irreligious, illegal and disorderly. But public opinion set in favor of the half-way covenant. At the next election, the members who had opposed the new church were left out, and others, of different opinions, elected. The Court then passed a vote in favor of the new church, and the cause of innovation and corruption of the purity of the churches triumphed.* This result generally ensues, when questions pertaining to religion are decided at the polls.

The half-way covenant was, at first, opposed by many churches, but it afterwards extensively prevailed, and "wherever," says Dr. Hawes, "it did prevail, the consequences were eminently unhappy. Great numbers came forward to own the covenant, as it was called, and had their children baptized; but very few joined the church, in full communion, or partook of the sacrament. Satisfied with being half-way in the church, and enjoying a part of its privileges, they settled down in a state of dull and heartless formality, and felt little or no concern respecting their present condition, or future prospects."†

But all men were not content to be half-way in the church. About the year 1700, Mr. Stoddard, a distinguished minister of Northampton, came to the conclusion, that the Lord's Supper is a converting ordinance, and that all persons ought to come to this ordinance. Thus all the barriers which separate the church from the world were

* Dr. Wisner's Historical Discourses, p. 10.
† Hawes' Tribute to the Memory of the Pilgrims, p. 150.

thrown down, and the consequences were deplorable. Multitudes of unconverted persons rushed into the churches, anxious for the privileges of church members, for political purposes. The church at Northampton is a signal instance of the effects of the system. The great President Edwards, after he had been pastor for several years, endeavored to introduce the old practice of discipline, and to require piety as a qualification for membership. But the worldly feeling in his parish was too strong, and notwithstanding his colossal reputation, and his faithful and successful labors, he was expelled from his pastoral office, in a most ungrateful and unkind manner.

We may mention, here, another cause of injury to the purity and permanent prosperity of the churches. The support of the ministry, by taxes, levied on all the inhabitants, operated oppressively on the members of other denominations, created much distress to individuals, and produced a wide-spread dissatisfaction in the community. As the right of a voice in the election of a minister was justly claimed by those who were obliged to pay taxes for his support, the character of the minister depended, of course, on that of a majority of the voters in a parish. The consequence has been, that in many instances, when the majority have become opposed to the doctrines of the existing church, the minister has been expelled, another of opposite sentiments has been chosen, the meeting-house has been seized, and funds, contributed by pious men of former generations, for the support of the ministry, have been applied to the maintenance of men to whom those contributors would have refused to listen. This is the natural effect of the system, and those who uphold it have no right to complain. The American principle, that representation accompanies taxation, is just. If men are taxed by law to support a minister, they have a right to a voice in his election, and they will, of course, choose a minister whose principles accord, as nearly as possible, with their own. Reflecting and pious men, generally, are now, it is believed, thoroughly convinced, that the principles of Roger Williams furnish the only secure basis for the peace and prosperity of a church. It is hoped that the laws of Massachusetts will, ere long, be conformed to these principles,

and religion be committed to the protection of God and of the liberal and pure-hearted disciples of the Redeemer.*

This subject has detained us from our main theme, though it is appropriate to a work which we design to be an exposition of the nature and effects both of the principles of religious liberty and of the opposite doctrines.

Mr. Clarke continued his faithful labors in England, and on the 8th of July, 1663, he obtained from Charles II. a charter, which continues, till the present day, to be the fundamental law of the State.† It commits the government of the colony to a Governor, Deputy Governor, and ten Assistants, to be elected annually, and a House of Deputies, consisting of six from Newport, four from each of the towns of Providence, Portsmouth and Warwick, and two from each of the other towns. It defines the boundaries of the colony, about which disputes existed for many years. It contains this most important provision, in which the principles on which the colony was founded are embodied: "No person within the said colony, at any time hereafter, shall be any wise molested, punished, disquieted, or called in question, for any differences in opinion, in matters of religion, who do not actually disturb the civil peace of our said colony; but that all and every person and persons may, from time to time, and at all

* A resolution to alter the third article of the Constitution of Massachusetts, as a preparatory step towards the repeal of the laws for the support of religion by taxation, has been adopted by the people, since the text was written. It will, undoubtedly, be followed by a repeal of the laws.

† It is an honorable proof of steadiness of character in the people of Rhode-Island, that they have continued to prosper under this charter for one hundred and seventy years. No interruption of the government has occurred during this long period, and no attempt has been made to resist it. No community ever enjoyed more perfect freedom, and yet none was ever more quiet and obedient to the laws. It is a gratifying evidence, that a truly free government is more stable than any other. The growth of the State has made some provisions of the charter operate unjustly. Providence, for example, with sixteen thousand inhabitants, sends only four representatives to the General Assembly, while Portsmouth, with seventeen hundred inhabitants, sends four, and Newport, with eight thousand, sends six. An attempt was made, a few years since, to obtain a new Constitution, but it did not succeed.

times hereafter, freely and fully have and enjoy his own and their judgments and consciences, in matters of religious concernments, throughout the tract of land hereafter mentioned, they behaving themselves peaceably and quietly, and not using this liberty to licentiousness and profaneness, nor to the civil injury or outward disturbance of others."*

This noble declaration is in accordance with the address of the petitioners to his Majesty, in which they "freely declared, that it is much on their hearts (if they be permitted) to hold forth a lively experiment, that a most flourishing civil state may stand, and best be maintained, and that among our English subjects, with a full liberty in religious concernments; and that true piety, rightly grounded upon Gospel principles, will give the best and greatest security to sovereignty, and will lay in the hearts of men the strongest obligations to true loyalty."

This charter was received with great joy. It was brought from Boston, by Capt. George Baxter, and was read publicly at Newport, November 24, 1663. The records say, that "the said letters, with his Majesty's royal stamp, and the broad seal, with much beseeming gravity, were held up on high, and presented to the perfect view of the people."

Thanks were voted to the King, to the Earl of Clarendon, and to Mr. Clarke, together with a resolution to pay all his expenses, and to present him with a hundred pounds. Thanks were also voted to Capt. Baxter, with a present of thirty pounds, besides his expenses from Boston.†

The first Assembly under the new charter was held March 1, 1663–4. Mr. Benedict Arnold was created by the charter the first Governor, and among the Assistants was Mr. Williams.

The Assembly now assumed a peremptory tone towards the disturbers of the public peace at Pawtuxet and Warwick, and towards intruders at Narraganset.

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* See the charter, Appendix, G.

† It is worthy of notice, that on May 9, 1663, the town of Providence voted, that "one hundred acres of upland and six acres of meadow shall be reserved for the maintenance of a school in this town."

Mr. Williams was appointed to transcribe the charter.*

At the session, in May, 1664, Mr. Williams was again an Assistant. At this session, the seal of the colony was fixed, an anchor, with the word HOPE over it, and the words Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations.

Mr. Williams was this year appointed one of a committee to review the laws, and one of another committee to fix the eastern line of the state.

At this session, a committee was appointed to audit Mr. Clarke's accounts. The sum of £343 15*s.* 6*d.*, was found to be due to him. Mr. Clarke returned from England, in June, 1664, after an absence, in the service of the colony, of twelve years. He was afterwards elected Deputy Governor three years successively. He was an able and good man, whom the State of Rhode-Island ought to remember with respect and gratitude, as one of her chief benefactors. He died April 20, 1676. The money due to him from the colony was never paid, during his life, though the Assembly frequently urged the towns to pay it, and Mr. Williams used his influence to accomplish this act of public justice.† Mr. Clarke, in his will, left a considerable estate, to be appropriated to "the relief of the poor, or bringing up children unto learning."

An account of the difficulties with Massachusetts, Connecticut and Plymouth, respecting boundaries, belongs rather to a history of Rhode-Island, than to this work. They continued for several years. Commissioners were appointed by the King, in 1664, to settle the disputes respecting the Narraganset country, which was claimed by Connecticut, and by individuals, who had purchased lands there. But the matter was not settled for many years. The boundaries fixed by the charter were at length ascertained and acknowledged.‡

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* At this session, Captain John Cranston was licensed to practise physic, with the title of "Doctor of Physic and Chirurgery."

† Mr. Williams felt a great esteem for Mr. Clarke. In the library of Brown University, is a copy of "The Bloody Tenet yet more Bloody," bequeathed to the library by the Rev. Isaac Backus. On a blank leaf are these words, in Mr. Williams' hand writing: "For his honored and beloved Mr. John Clarke, an eminent witness of Christ Jesus, against the Bloody Doctrine of Persecution, &c."

‡ For documents on the subject of boundaries, see 1 His. Col. v. pp 216—252. See also, 2 His. Col. vii. pp. 75—113, Rhode-Island State Papers, furnished by the Hon. Samuel Eddy.

Two topics deserve notice here, because they affect the character of Roger Williams, and of Rhode-Island. We allude to the charges, that in 1663–4, Roman Catholics were excluded from the rights of citizens, and that in 1665, oppressive laws were enacted against the Quakers.

The first of these charges is made by Chalmers,* whose situation, as chief clerk in the Plantation Office, in England, gave him access to original documents. He asserts, that at the meeting of the General Assembly, March 1, 1663–4, it was enacted, "that no freeman shall be imprisoned, or deprived of his freehold, or condemned, but by the judgment of his peers, or the law of the colony; that no tax shall be imposed or required of the colonists, but by the act of the General Assembly; that all men [professing Christianity] of competent estates, and of civil conversation, who acknowledge and are obedient to the civil magistrates, though of different judgments in religious affairs, [Roman Catholics only excepted] shall be admitted freemen, or may choose, or be chosen, colonial officers."†

Such an act would, indeed, have been an anomaly in the legislation of Rhode-Island, and it has been alleged as an evidence of inconsistency in Roger Williams and the colony. The subject has, therefore, been examined with great care. The Hon. Samuel Eddy, for many years the Secretary of State in Rhode-Island, declares:‡ "I have formerly examined the records of the State, from its first settlement, with a view to historical information, and lately from 1663 to 1719, with a particular view to this law excluding Roman Catholics from the privileges of freemen, and can find nothing that has any reference to it, nor any thing that gives any preference or privileges to men of one set of religious opinions over those of another, until the revision of 1745."

This testimony might, alone, be sufficient to disprove the allegation, though it is possible, that such an act might be passed, and not be recorded. But it is not probable, and when the uniform policy of the colony from the beginning, and other circumstances, are considered, it becomes

* Political Annals, b. i. c. xi. pp. 276, 279.

† Holmes' Am. Annals, vol. i. p. 336.

‡ Walsh's "Appeal from the Judgments of Great Britain," pp. 427—435.

morally certain, that no such act ever received the sanction of the Legislature of Rhode-Island.

That entire liberty was professed and maintained, from the commencement of the colony, is certain. It was one of the fundamental regulations in the respective towns, and when they were united, under the first charter, it was expressly enacted, that, while the civil laws should be obeyed, "all men may walk as their consciences persuade them, every one in the name of his God."*

The second charter declared, that "no person within the said colony, at any time hereafter, shall be anywise molested, punished or disquieted, or called in question, for any differences in opinion, in matters of religion, and do not actually disturb the civil peace of our said colony."

It is utterly incredible, that the Assembly, while they were passing votes of thanks to the King for the charter, would enact a law in violation of his positive declaration in the instrument itself, and at variance with their previous policy and with all their institutions. An exclusion of Catholics, moreover, would not only have violated the charter, and thus offended the King, but the legislators of Rhode-Island had sufficient knowledge of Charles, to be aware, that nothing would be less acceptable to him than a law against the Catholics, for whom he endeavored to obtain toleration in England.

It may be added, that there were no Catholics in Rhode-Island, so late as 1695, according to Cotton Mather.† Mr. Eddy well remarks: "Why a law should be made to exclude from the privileges of freemen, those who were not inhabitants, by those who believed all to be equally entitled to their religious opinions, is difficult to conceive."

At the next session, in May, 1664, the Assembly enacted, that, "at present this General Assembly judgeth it their

* This was the Rhode-Island doctrine and practice from the beginning. It was deeply rooted in all hearts. Among the deputies to the General Assembly, in 1675, the name, "*Toleration* Harris," occurs.

† He says, in this year, that Rhode-Island colony "has been a colluvies of Antinomians, Familists, Anabaptists, Antisabbatarians, Arminians, Socinians, Quakers, Ranters, every thing in the world but *Roman Catholics* and true Christians—though of the latter, I hope, there have been more than of the former among them."—Magnalia, b. vii. c. iii. s. 12.

duty to signify his Majesty's gracious pleasure vouchsafed in these words to us, verbatim, (viz.)"—quoting the declaration from the charter which is cited above.

At the session in May, 1665, in answer to certain propositions of the King's Commissioners, in which the King requires, that all the citizens shall enjoy equal civil and religious rights, without regard to their opinions, the Assembly say: "This Assembly do, with all gladness of heart, and humbleness of mind, acknowledge the great goodness of God and favor of his Majesty in that respect, declaring, that as it hath been a principle set forth and maintained in this colony, *from the very beginning thereof*, so it is much on their hearts to preserve the same liberty to all persons within this colony forever, as to the worship of God therein, taking care for the preservation of the civil government, to the doing of justice and preserving each other's privileges from wrong and violence to others."

Mr. Eddy accounts for the existence of the spurious words in the copy of the laws from which Mr. Chalmers quoted, by supposing, that they were inserted, without authority, at some period subsequent to 1719, by a revising committee, who might be desirous to please the government in England. Mr. Eddy says, in conclusion: "Thus you have positive and indubitable evidence, that the law excluding Roman Catholics from the privileges of freemen was not passed in 1663–4, but that they were by law, at this time, and long after, entitled to all the privileges of other citizens; and satisfactory evidence that these privileges were continued by law until 1719, when, or in one of the subsequent revisions, the words *professing Christianity*, and *Roman Catholics only excepted*, were inserted by the revising committee."

If, however, such an act had been passed, it would not necessarily impeach the character of Mr. Williams. He was an Assistant, only, in the Legislature of 1663–4, and could not be responsible for its acts. His own principles are on record. He contended for liberty of conscience to all men without any restriction. In his "Hireling Ministry none of Christ's," printed in 1652—only eleven years before—he says: "All these consciences, (yea, the very conscience of Papists, Jews, &c. as I have proved at large in my answer to Mr. Cotton's washings) ought freely

and impartially to be permitted their several respective worships, their ministers of worships, and what way of maintaining them they please."

We proceed, now, to the other charge. It is contained in an article, in 1 His. Col. v. pp. 216–220, signed Francis Brinley, whose statement is repeated in Holmes' American Annals, vol. i. p. 341. Mr. Brinley says: "1665. The government and council of Rhode-Island, &c. passed an order for outlawing the people called Quakers, because they would not bear arms, and to seize their estates; but the people in general rose up against these severe orders, and would not suffer it."

We are again indebted to Mr. Eddy for the means of correcting a mistake. He says (2 His. Col. vii. p. 97,) that the account of Mr. Brinley "is incorrect and partial." There was a difficulty, in which the Quakers, it seems, felt themselves aggrieved, but it was not the result of any acts aimed directly at them. The origin of it, as Mr. Eddy thinks, was this: The commissioners of the King required, in his name, "that all householders, inhabiting this colony, take the oath of allegiance." The Assembly, in reply, stated, that it had been the uniform practice of the colony, in pursuance of their great principles of religious liberty, to allow those who objected to take an oath, to make an engagement, under the penalty for false swearing. An engagement was accordingly drawn up, in which the individual promised to bear true allegiance to the King and his successors, and to yield "due obedience unto the laws established from time to time." The Quakers, it appears, objected to this part of the engagement, because it bound them to pay obedience to the militia laws. The Assembly had enacted, that those who did not take the engagement, should not be permitted to "vote for public officers or deputies, or enjoy any privilege of freemen." Those persons, consequently, who refused to take the engagement, were disfranchised; and to this effect, Mr. Brinley probably alludes, when he says that the Quakers were outlawed. If so, his statement is very loose and injurious, for it implies, that the act was expressly directed against them. But there was no design, apparently, on the part of the Assembly to affect them. The King commanded the General Assembly to require an oath of allegiance. They dis-

pensed with the oath, but required an engagement, promising, in general terms, obedience to the laws. It would seem, that all the citizens might have safely taken the engagement, reserving their opposition to particular laws, to which they might be conscientiously opposed. An engagement to obey the laws would, of course, mean such laws only as were consistent with the laws of God and with the rights of conscience. The Assembly cannot, at any rate, be justly charged with an assault on the Quakers. The engagement was mitigated, the very next year, to suit their views, and every disposition was manifested to consult their feelings and respect their rights. One of their number was, the next year, elected Deputy Governor.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Mr. Williams' public services—religious habits—efforts as a minister—Indians—private affairs—letter to John Whipple.

We are now approaching the close of Mr. Williams' life. Years were increasing upon him, and abating the vigor of his body and the ardor of his mind. Yet we find his name in the records both of the town and colony, so frequently, as to prove, that he retained his zeal for the public welfare, and that he enjoyed, to the end of his life, a large measure of public confidence. In the town meetings, he was often appointed moderator. He was appointed as a member of numerous committees, and was usually selected, when a skilful pen was needed for the public service.

After serving the colony for two years, as President, and repeatedly as Assistant, or Commissioner, under the first charter, he occupied a seat in the General Assembly, under the new charter, as an Assistant, in the years 1664, 1670, and 1671. He was chosen, in 1677, but he refused to serve, on account, probably, of his age. He was a Deputy from Providence, in May, 1667.

Of his religious habits we have little knowledge. We have satisfactory reasons, however, for believing, that he preserved the character of an upright Christian. His books and letters are distinguished by the language of piety, and his general conduct exhibited its influence. Even Cotton Mather confesses, that "in many things he acquitted himself so laudably, that many judicious persons judged him to have had the root of the matter in him, during the long winter of this retirement."* He had, it is true, no connection with any church; a circumstance, which we must regret, because it injured his reputation and his usefulness, while it diminished his personal enjoyment and spiritual growth. But we know that his reason for this course was, an erroneous idea, that the true church was, for

* Magnalia, b. vii. c. ii. §8.

a time, lost. He did not undervalue the benefits of church fellowship, but ardently longed for the restoration of the church. In his reply to George Fox, written about 1672, he says, (p. 66,) "After all my search, and examinations, and considerations, I said, I do profess to believe, that some come nearer to the first primitive churches, and the institutions and appointments of Christ, than others; as in many respects, so in that gallant, and heavenly, and fundamental principle, of the true matter of a Christian congregation, flock or society, viz. actual believers, true disciples and converts, living stones, such as can give some account how the grace of God hath appeared unto them, and wrought that change in them. I professed, that if my soul could find rest, in joining unto any of the churches professing Christ Jesus now extant, I would readily and gladly do it, yea unto themselves, whom I now opposed."*

As a minister of the Gospel, we have evidence that he did not wholly discontinue his labors; though he must, according to his principles, have confined himself to "prophecy," or a declaration of truth and witness against error. Mr. Callender says, (p. 57,) "Mr. Williams used to uphold a public worship, sometimes, though not weekly, as many now alive [1738] remember, and he used to go once a month, for many years, to Mr. Smith's, in the Narraganset, for the same end." If persons alive in 1738, were present at Mr. Williams' meetings, as Mr. Callender's expression seems to imply, those meetings must have been held towards the close of his life. His visits to Narraganset were designed, it has been supposed, for the benefit of the Indians; but this is doubtful. There is reason to believe, that his object was to instruct the whites, who either

* In thus living disconnected with any church, he followed the example of Milton and Cromwell. Of Milton, Toland says: "In his early days, he was a favorer of those Protestants, then opprobriously called by the name of Puritans. In his middle years, he was best pleased with the Independents and Anabaptists, as allowing of more liberty than others, and coming nearest, in his opinion, to the primitive practice; but in the latter part of his life, he was not a professed member of any particular sect among Christians; he frequented none of their assemblies, nor made use of their peculiar rites in his family." Ivirney's Life of Milton, p. 251.

lived in that neighborhood, far from any Christian teacher, or who were occasionally at Mr. Smith's trading-house.*

He did, however, endeavor to instruct the Indians. "He made," says Mr. Callender, (p. 84) "some laudable attempts to instruct them, yet he was much discouraged, not only by want of a lawful warrant, or an immediate commission to be an apostle to them, but especially by (as he thought) the insuperable difficulty of preaching Christianity to them in their own language, with any propriety, without inspiration." On this subject, he speaks, in his "Bloody Tenet more Bloody." He says, that he and others have found "how hard it is for any man to attain a little propriety of their language in common things, (so as to escape derision among them) in many years, without abundant of conversing with them, in eating, travelling and lodging with them." He refers, for proof, to the case of Mr. Eliot, who, notwithstanding his intimacy with the Indians, could not always make himself understood.† Mr. Williams seemed to think, that when the ministry should be restored, the gift of tongues would be bestowed on missionaries, to qualify them for their work.

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* In a letter, dated May 8, 1682, he requests Governor Bradstreet, of Boston, to assist him in printing some "discourses, which (by many tedious journies) I have had with the *scattered English* at Narraganset, before the war, [Philip's war, of 1675–6] and since." 2 His. Col. viii. p. 197.

† Mr. Williams says, that Mr. Eliot promised a suit of clothes to an old Indian, who, not understanding him, asked another Indian, what Mr. Eliot said. This reminds us of the well known anecdote respecting his translation of the Bible:—"While Eliot was engaged in translating the Bible into the Indian language, he came to the following passage in Judges, 5: 28: "The mother of Sisera looked out at the window, and cried through the *lattice*," &c. Not knowing an Indian word to signify lattice, he applied to several of the natives, and endeavored to describe to them what a lattice resembled. He described it as frame work, netting, wicker, or whatever occurred to him as illustrative, when they gave him a long, barbarous and unpronouncable word, as are most of the words in their language. Some years after, when he had learned their dialect more correctly, he is said to have laughed outright, upon finding that the Indians had given him the true term for *eel-pot*. "The mother of Sisera looked out at the window, and cried through the *eel-pot*." Bigelow's History of Natick, p. 84. This anecdote illustrates the difficulties of translating, and may suggest a useful caution to translators.

The Narraganset Indians were strongly opposed to the Gospel. It is said, that they allowed Mr. Williams to preach to them, but would permit no one else. They loved him, but they rejected his doctrines. His Key and his letters prove, nevertheless, that his benevolent efforts were not entirely in vain, and authorize the hope, that at the last day, he may share, with Eliot, Mayhew and Brainerd, the blessing of ransomed souls from among the unhappy native tribes.

Of Mr. Williams' private affairs, we know little. Notices respecting lands occasionally appear on the records of the town.*

His public spirit, and disposition to serve his fellow-citizens, appear on various occasions. In 1666, a vote of the town was passed, "remitting to him an engagement made by him to the town, for clapboards and nails for the building of a town house." The inference is, that the project which he, perhaps, devised, and offered to promote, failed.

The following letter to the town, relates to a bridge. On the first Monday of June, 1662, the town had ordered a bridge to be built over Moshassuck river, "by Thomas Olney his house," to be done before the next haytime. It would seem, that this order was not accom-

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* "February 19, 1665. Ordered, That Roger Williams shall have his first choice, after William Hawkins and John Steere, of the fifty acres of land on the east side of the north line, which beginneth seven miles from Fox's Hill, west."

"June 4, 1666. It is granted unto Roger Williams, that he may change three acres of land lying in the neck, and take it up somewhere about the third lake, if it may, with conveniency, without damage to the highways, or other men's lands, which are already laid out."

September 30, 1667, he was allowed to change three acres of land, which was laid out to him, in addition to his house lot, and take it up in any part of the common which is not prohibited.

May 2, 1667, there were laid out to him "fifty acres between the seven mile and the four line." This four mile line seems to have been the original line, about four miles west from Fox's Hill. Additional land being purchased of the Indians, the seven mile line was established, June 4, 1660, beginning seven miles west of Fox's Hill, and running north to Pawtucket river, and south to Pawtuxet river.

plished, and that the following letter refers to the same project:

"*Providence*, 10 *Feb.* 1667–8.

"Loving friends and neighbors,

"Unto this day, it pleased the town to adjourn for the answering of the bill for the bridge and others. I have conferred with Shadrach Manton and Nathaniel Waterman, about their proposal, and their result is, that they cannot obtain such a number as will join with them, to undertake the bridge upon the hopes of meadow. I am, therefore, bold, after so many anchors come home, and so much trouble and long debates and deliberations, to offer, that if you please, I will, with God's help, take this bridge unto my care, by that moderate toll of strangers of all sorts, which hath been mentioned; will maintain it so long as it pleaseth God that I live in this town.

"2. The town shall be free from all toll, only I desire one day's work of one man in a year from every family, but from those that have teams, and have much use of the bridge, one day's work of a man and team, and of those that have less use, half a day.

"3. I shall join with any of the town, more or few, who will venture their labor with me for the gaining of meadow.

"4. I promise, if it please God, that I gain meadow in equal value to the town's yearly help, I shall then release that.

"5. I desire, if it please God to be with me, to go through such a charge and trouble as will be to bring this to a settled way, and then suddenly to take me from hence, I desire that before another, my wife and children, if they desire it, may engage in my stead to these conditions.

"6. If the town please to consent, I desire that one of yourselves be nominated, to join with the clerk to draw up the writing. R. W."

It does not appear, whether the bridge was built, at this time, or not. In February, 1711–12, Mr. Daniel Abbot was sent as an agent to Massachusetts and Connecticut, to solicit aid in building "three great bridges, upon the road leading from Connecticut toward Boston, viz. one at Paw-

tuxet Falls, one at Weybosset in Providence,* and the other over Pawtucket river."

Mr. Williams omitted no opportunity of serving the Indians. The following letter was written, apparently, to the government of Massachusetts :

"*Providence, 7th of May*, 1668, (*so called.*)

"I humbly offer to consideration my long and constant experience, since it pleased God to bring me unto these parts, as to the Narraganset and Nipmuck people.

"First, that all the Nipmucks were, unquestionably, subject to the Narraganset sachems, and, in a special manner to Mexham, the son of Canonicus, and late husband to this old squaw sachem, now only surviving. I have abundant and daily proof of it, as plain and clear as that the inhabitants of Newbury or Ipswich, &c. are subject to the government of the Massachusetts colony.

"2. I was called by his Majesty's Commissioners to testify in a like case between Philip and the Plymouth Indians, on the one party, and the Narragansets on the other, and it pleased the committee to declare, that the King had not given them any commission to alter the Indians' laws and customs, which they observed amongst themselves : most of which, although they are, like them-

*John Howland, Esq. says: "I think there must have been a bridge at Weybosset before 1712." Perhaps the bridge ordered to be built over Moshassuck river, in 1662, and to which Mr. Williams' letter may refer, was intended to be somewhere between the present Great Bridge and Smith's Bridge, for the purpose of getting access to the natural meadows at the head of the cove. The mention of "hay time," and the references of Mr. Williams to the "hopes of meadow," may strengthen this supposition. Mr. Howland says, "I have frequently been told by Nathan Waterman, that teams and men on horseback used to cross the river (before his day) across the clam bed, opposite Angell's land (at low tide) and land somewhere on the western shore. The Thomas Olney lot was where the Knight Dexter tavern now is, and Angell's was the next south, including part of the Baptist meeting-house lot, and Steeple street. In front of this, lay the shoal place, called the clam-bed." May 14, 1660, in a petition of the town to the General Assembly, against an assessment on the town of thirty pounds, to build a prison at Newport, the town said, that they had just spent one hundred and sixty pounds in building a bridge." April 27, 1663, George Sheppard gave all his lands west of seven mile line to the town, for "maintaining a bridge at Weybosset."

selves, barbarous, yet in the case of their mournings, they are more humane, and it seems to be more inhumane in those that professed subjection to this the very last year, under some kind of feigned protection of the English, to be singing and dancing, drinking, &c. while the rest were lamenting their sachems' deaths.

"I abhor most of their customs; I know they are barbarous. I respect not one party more than the other, but I desire to witness truth; and as I desire to witness against oppression, so, also, against the slighting of civil, yea, of barbarous order and government, as respecting every shadow of God's gracious appointments.

"This I humbly offer, as in the holy presence of God.

ROGER WILLIAMS."

The following letter* gives us a view of some of the trials which Mr. Williams suffered:

"For John Whipple, jun. these.

"Neighbor Whipple,

"I kindly thank you, that you so far have regarded my lines as to return me your thoughts, whether sweet or sour I desire not to mind. I humbly hope, that as you shall never find me self-conceited nor self-seeking, so, as to others, not pragmatical and a busy-body as you insinuate. My study is to be swift to hear, and slow to speak, and I could tell you of five or six grounds (it may be more) why I give this my testimony against this unrighteous and monstrous proceeding of Christian brethren helping to hale one another before the world, whose song was lately and loudly sung in my ears, viz. the world would be quiet enough, were it not for these holy brethren, their divisions and contentions. The last night, Shadrach Manton told me that I had spoken bad words of Gregory Dexter (though Shadrach deals more ingenuously than yourself saying the same thing, for he tells me wherein,) viz. that I said he makes a fool of his conscience. I told him I said so, and I think to our neighbor Dexter himself; for I believe he might as well be moderator or general deputy or general

* R. I. Lit. Rep. vol. i. pp. 638–640.

assistant, as go so far as he goes, in many particulars; but what if I or my conscience be a fool, yet it is commendable and admirable in him, that being a man of education, and of a noble calling, and versed in militaries, that his conscience forced him to be such a child in his own house, when W. Har. strained for the rate (which I approve of) with such imperious insulting over his conscience, which all conscientious men will abhor to hear of. However, I commend that man, whether Jew, or Turk, or Papist, or whoever, that steers no otherwise than his conscience dares, till his conscience tells him that God gives him a greater latitude. For, neighbor, you shall find it rare to meet with men of conscience, men that for fear and love of God dare not lie, nor be drunk, nor be contentious, nor steal, nor be covetous, nor voluptuous, nor ambitious, nor lazy-bodies, nor busy-bodies, nor daré displease God by omitting either service or suffering, though of reproach, imprisonment, banishment and death, because of the fear and love of God.

"If W. Wickenden received a beast of W. Field, for ground of the same hold, I knew it not, and so spake the truth, as I understood it. 2. Though I have not spoke with him, yet I hear it was not of that hold or tenure, for we have had four sorts of bounds at least.

"First, the grant of as large accommodations as any English in New-England had. This the sachems always promised me, and they had cause, for I was as a right hand unto them, to my great cost and travail. Hence I was sure of the Toceheunguanit meadows, and what could with any show of reason have been desired; but some, (that never did this town nor colony good, and, it is feared, never will,) cried out, when Roger Williams had laid himself down as a stone in the dust, for after-comers to step on in town and colony, 'Who is Roger Williams? We know the Indians and the sachems as well as he. We will trust Roger Williams no longer. We will have our bounds confirmed us under the sachems' hands before us.'

"2. Hence arose, to my soul cutting and grief, the second sort of bounds, viz. the bounds set under the hands of those great sachems Canonicus and Miantinomo, and were set so short (as to Mashapaug and Pawtucket, and at that time,) because they would not intrench upon the In-

dians inhabiting round about us, for the prevention of strife between us.

"The third sort of bounds were of favor and grace, invented, as I think, and prosecuted by that noble spirit, now with God, Chad Brown. Presuming upon the sachems' grant to me, they exceeded the letter of the sachems' deed, so far as reasonably they judged, and this with promise of satisfaction to any native who should reasonably desire it. In this third sort of bounds, lay this piece of meadow hard by Captain Fenner's ground, which, with two hogs, William Wickenden gave to W. Field for a small beast, &c.

"Beside these three sort of bounds, there arose a fourth, like the fourth beast in Daniel, exceeding dreadful and terrible, unto which the Spirit of God gave no name nor bounds, nor can we in the first rise of ours, only boundless bounds, or a monstrous beast, above all other beasts or monsters. Now, as from this fourth wild beast in Daniel, in the greater world, have arisen all the storms and tempests, factions and divisions, in our little world amongst us, and what the tearing consequences yet will be, is only known to the Most Holy and Only Wise.

"You conclude with your innocence and patience under my clamorous tongue, but I pray you not to forget that there are two basins. David had one, Pilate another. David washed his hands in innocence, and so did Pilate, and so do all parties, all the world over. As to innocence, my former paper saith something. As to patience, how can you say you are patient under my clamorous tongue, when that very speech is most impatient and unchristian? My clamor and crying shall be to God and men (I hope without revenge or wrath) but for a little ease, and that yourselves, and they that scorn and hate me most, may, if the Eternal please, find cooling in that hot, eternal day that is near approaching. This shall be the continual clamor or cry of

"Your unworthy
friend and neighbor,
"R. W.

"*Providence, 8th July*, 1669, (*so called.*)"

This letter is interesting for several reasons. The refer-

ence to Mr. Dexter's refusal to pay his taxes, from conscientious scruples, shows, that Mr. Williams accurately discriminated between the rights of conscience, and a perversion of those rights. It is worthy of notice, too, that Mr. Williams condemned the conduct of Mr. Dexter, though an intimate friend; and approved, in part, at least, that of Mr. Harris, though a bitter hostility existed between them

CHAPTER XXV.

Controversy with the Quakers—Philip's war—letters—Mr. Williams' death.

We will now give a brief account of Mr. Williams' controversy with the Quakers. It was an unhappy strife, in which all parties displayed more zeal than Christian meekness or charity. It was especially unfortunate for Mr. Williams, for it plunged him, in his old age, into a dispute, in which he could not hope to effect much good, and which was certain to draw upon him much odium.

His motives, however, ought to be clearly understood. The colony of Rhode-Island had incurred reproach among the other colonies, because she refused to join in a persecution of the Quakers. Rhode-Island was the refuge of these persons, some of the magistrates, at this time, were of that sect, and it was asserted, that the public feeling in Rhode-Island was friendly to their doctrines and practices. Mr. Williams declares, in his book on the controversy, that he was induced to engage in a dispute with them, in order to bear public testimony, that while he was decidedly opposed to any measures which tended to impair liberty of conscience, he nevertheless disapproved the principles of the Quakers.* He says, that when he met them at Newport, on the first day of the dispute, "I took my seat at the other end of the house opposite to them, and began telling them, that the Most High was my witness, that not out of any prejudice against, or disrespect to, the persons of the Quakers, many of whom I knew and did love and honor, nor any foolish passion of pride or boldness, for I desired

*"I had in mine eye the vindicating of this colony for receiving of such persons whom others would not. We suffer for their sakes, and are accounted their abettors. That, therefore, together with the improvement of our liberties, which the God of heaven and our King's Majesty have graciously given, I might give a public testimony against their opinions, in such a way and exercise, I judged it incumbent upon my spirit and conscience to do it (in some regards) more than most in the colony." p. 26.

to be sensible of my many decays of my house of clay, and other ways; nor any earthly or worldly ends I had, that occasioned this trouble to myself and them." p. 26.

Candor must admit, that his motives were laudable—a zeal for the honor of the colony, and for what he believed to be the truth. He accordingly took occasion, when the celebrated George Fox* was in Rhode-Island, to propose a public discussion, at Newport and Providence, in which the principles of the Quakers should be examined, in a friendly debate.

The challenge was in these words:

"To George Fox, or any other of my countrymen at Newport, who say they are the apostles and messengers of Christ Jesus. In humble confidence of the help of the Most High, I offer to maintain, in public, against all comers, these fourteen propositions following, to wit: the first seven at Newport, and the other seven at Providence. For the time when, I refer it to George Fox and his friends, at Newport."

Such public debates were not uncommon during the reformation, in Germany, and in later times, in England. They have been held, in our own days, but their effect has seldom been beneficial to the cause of truth. They are more adapted to irritate than to convince. Few men have sufficient self-command to preserve their temper, in a controversy conducted through the press. When brought into personal contact, before a large assembly, the meekest men could scarcely avoid being chafed and petulant. Such contests are like the battles of old times, when the spear or the sword was the chief weapon, and the combatants,

* This remarkable man was born at Drayton, in Leicestershire, in 1624. He was placed as an apprentice to a grazier, but, at the age of nineteen, he thought himself called to forsake every thing else, and devote himself to religion. In 1648, he began to preach, and adopted the peculiar language and manners which have distinguished his followers. He incurred persecution, was often imprisoned, and treated with great severity. In 1669, he married, and soon after visited America, where he remained two years, and made many proselytes. He returned to England, and after many sufferings, he died in 1690, in the sixty-seventh year of his age. His works form three folio volumes. "He was undoubtedly a man of strong natural parts, and William Penn speaks in high terms of his meekness, humility and temperance."—Ency. Amer. art. George Fox.

being brought hand to hand, fought with embittered rancor and dreadful carnage. Modern battles, in which the parties are at a greater distance, are less sanguinary. The result of these disputes, moreover, is as uncertain a test of truth and justice, as the termination of the ancient appeals to personal combat. Stronger lungs and greater self-conceit have sometimes enabled the advocate of error to win the victory.

The fourteen propositions of Mr. Williams we shall not quote. They affirmed, that the principles of the Quakers were unscriptural and pernicious.

Mr. Williams sent these propositions to Newport, but George Fox left the town for England, without seeing them. Mr. Williams asserted, that Fox departed in order to avoid the debate, and he condescended to a pun on "George Fox's *slily* departing." This insinuation was unfounded and unjustifiable. Fox unceremoniously charged him with lying, but this gross accusation cannot be admitted. Mr. Williams undoubtedly thought his assertion true,* though he ought not to have made it without better authority.

The debate commenced, however, at Newport, on the 9th of August, 1672. Mr. Williams rowed, in a boat, to Newport, thirty miles, a feat which few men of seventy-three years could perform, in these degenerate days. He arrived at Newport about midnight.† The next day the debate commenced, in the Quaker meeting-house. John Stubs, John Burnyeat and William Edmundson were the champions opposed to him. He speaks of the two former as able and learned men. The debate continued three days. It was, according to his account, a very disorderly scene. There was no moderator, and Mr. Williams complains of frequent and rude interruptions. His health was feeble, and he says, that, on the morning of the second

* The letters were sent, through some friends of Mr. Fox, to the Deputy Governor Cranston. They were dated July 13, but Mr. Cranston did not receive them till the 26th, which, as he said, excited his surprise. There was some room for suspicion, that the letters were purposely concealed till Mr. Fox had gone.

† "God graciously assisted me in rowing all day, with my old bones, so that I got to Newport toward the midnight before the morning appointed." p. 24.

day, "I heartily wished that I might rather have kept my bed, than have gone forth to a whole day's fresh disputes." His brother, Robert Williams, then a schoolmaster in Newport, attempted to aid him, but his interferenee was not permitted by his opponents. Mr. Williams' demeanor, during the controversy, was, apparently, patient and collected. The debate was renewed at Providence on the 17th, and continued one day, when it was terminated, without producing any change of opinion on either side.

Mr. Williams wrote an account of this dispute, in a large book, of 327 pages. It was entitled, "George Fox digged out of his Burrowes," &c., in allusion to a book which Fox and his friend Edward Burrowes (or Burrough) had written. Of Mr. Williams' book we shall give a further account. It is able and acute, but it is disfigured by much severe language.

Fox and Burnyeat wrote a reply, entitled, "A New-England Firebrand Quenched," in which they railed at Mr. Williams, in a coarse and bitter style.*

The following letter of Mr. Williams alludes to the publication of his book against Fox: †

"My dear friend, Samuel Hubbard,

"To yourself and aged companion, my loving respects in the Lord Jesus, who ought to be our hope of glory, begun in this life, and enjoyed to all eternity. I have herein re-

* In the General Assembly, in 1672, it was voted, that the deputies should receive two shillings per day. A law was passed, exempting from military duty persons who had conscientious scruples. On September 2, 1673, it was enacted, that every person who sold liquor, so that any one became drunk, or who kept a gaming house, should be fined six shillings. Constables were appointed to watch on the "first day of the week" against all "deboystness." There was, about this time, a trial of an Indian, by a jury, half of whom were Indians. In 1679, a fine of five shillings was imposed for employing an Indian or other servant on the first day; and the same fine, or sitting in the stocks three hours, for gaming, playing, shooting, or sitting drinking in an alehouse "more than necessity requireth," on the first day. It does not appear, that there was any rule, by which to judge of the "necessity." The doctrine of total abstinence was then unknown.

On the 11th of March, 1674–5, Mr. Williams acknowledged the receipt from Benjamin Hernden of six shillings, ninepence, making up eleven pounds, "for the house and land sold to him, which was John Clawson's."

† Backus, vol. i. p. 510.

turned your little, yet great remembrance of the hand of the Lord to yourself and your son, late departed. I praise the Lord for your humble kissing of his holy rod, and acknowledging his just and righteous, together with his gracious and merciful, dispensation to you. I rejoice, also, to read your heavenly desires and endeavors, that your trials may be gain to your own souls, and the souls of the youth of the place, and all of us. You are not unwilling, I judge, that I deal plainly and friendly with you. After all that I have seen and read and compared about the seventh day, (and I have earnestly and carefully read and weighed all I could come at in God's holy presence) I cannot be removed from Calvin's mind, and indeed Paul's mind, Col. ii. that all those sabbaths of seven days were figures, types and shadows, and forerunners of the Son of God, and that the change is made from the remembrance of the first creation, and that (figurative) rest on the seventh day, to the remembrance of the second creation on the first, on which our Lord arose conqueror from the dead. Accordingly, I have read many, but see no satisfying answer to those three Scriptures, chiefly Acts 20, 1 Cor. 16, Rev. 1, in conscience to which I make some poor conscience to God as to the rest day. As for thoughts for England, I humbly hope the Lord hath hewed me to write a large narrative of all those four days' agitation between the Quakers and myself; if it please God I cannot get it printed in New-England, I have great thoughts and purposes for old. My age, lameness, and many other weaknesses, and the dreadful hand of God at sea, calls for deep consideration. What God may please to bring forth in the spring, his holy wisdom knows. If he please to bring to an absolute purpose, I will send you word, and my dear friend, Obadiah Holmes, who sent me a message to the same purpose. At present, I pray salute respectively Mr. John Clarke and his brothers, Mr. Tory, Mr. Edes, Edward Smith, William Hiscox, Stephen Mumford, and other friends, whose preservation, of the island, and this country, I humbly beg of the Father of Mercies, in whom I am yours unworthy, R. W."

The calamitous and decisive war with Philip claims our notice. This chief, whose Indian name was Metacom,

but who received the name of Philip from the English, was the second son of Massassoit, the principal sachem of the Pokanokets. Philip succeeded his brother Alexander, who died in 1662, in consequence, it has been supposed, of his shame and resentment for what he thought an insult from the whites. Philip was an able and ambitious chief. He saw the increasing power of the colonists, and clearly perceived, that the utter extinction of the Indians would be the result, unless the progress of the whites could be arrested. It is said, however, that he was averse to commencing hostilities, being aware that the colonists were too powerful to be successfully resisted;* but he was forced into the war by the ardor of his young warriors. All the Indian tribes remained quiet, with the exception of a few hostile indications, for nearly forty years after the destruction of the Pequods.

Rumors of intended war on the part of Philip were circulated in 1671. The Governor of Plymouth, and several other gentlemen from Plymouth and Massachusetts, invited Philip to meet them at Taunton; but he refused to come, till, it is said,† Mr. Williams and Mr. Brown, of Swansea, were employed as mediators. Mr. Williams' agency was, as usual, successful, and Philip met the Governor, disclaimed all hostile designs, promised future fidelity, and surrendered about seventy guns, as a proof of his sincerity. The war was thus delayed four years.

The interval was, it appears, employed by Philip in making preparations for war. He endeavored to concert a general league among the Indians in New-England, and it is said, that most of the tribes entered into his plans. The Narragansets, especially, who still nourished a desire of vengeance for the treacherous murder, as they viewed it, of their sachem, Miantinomo, engaged to aid Philip, with a force of four thousand warriors, in the spring of 1676.‡

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* Callender, p. 73. † Backus, vol. i. p. 418.

‡ Hubbard's Narrative, p. 55, edition of 1775. Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 406, says, that the Narragansets, in 1675, were supposed to have 2000 warriors. Mr. Callender, p. 75, thinks that Hubbard's and Hutchinson's accounts may be reconciled, by supposing that the four thousand warriors to be raised by the Narragansets included other Indians within their influence.

But, for some cause, hostilities commenced before the time appointed. Philip is supposed to have been urged to begin the war, by the death of John Sassamon, an Indian, who had served Philip as a secretary. He communicated to the English the designs of Philip, and he was soon after found murdered. Three Indians, who were believed to be his murderers, were tried and executed, at Plymouth, in June, 1675. Philip, who was thought to be implicated in the murder, immediately commenced hostilities, by attacking the town of Swansea, on the 24th of June. The war, being commenced, was prosecuted with great fury, many towns were burnt, and many of the inhabitants killed. It was a mercy to the whites, that the Indians had not fully matured their plans and begun the contest in concert. The Narragansets renewed their league with the colonists,* though they afterwards joined in the war against them.

The following letter of Mr. Williams to Governor Leverett, of Massachusetts, is very interesting and characteristic:

"To the Governor at Boston, present. Per neighbor Samuel Whiffel.

"*Providence*, 11, 8, 75, (*so accounted.*)

"Sir,

"Yours of the 7th I gladly and thankfully received, and humbly desire to praise that Most High and Holy Hand, invisible and only wise, who casts you down, by so many public and personal trials, and lifts you up again with any (*lucida intervalla*) mitigations and refreshments. *Ab inferno nulla redemptio:* from the grave and hell no return. Here, like Noah's dove, we have our checker work, blacks and whites come out and go into the ark, out and in again till the last, whom we never see back again.

"The business of the day in New-England is not only to keep ourselves from murdering, our houses, barns, &c. from firing, to destroy and cut off the barbarians, or subdue and reduce them, but our main and principal *opus dici* is, to listen to what the Eternal speaketh to the whole ship, (the country, colonies, towns, &c.) and each private cabin, family, person, &c. He will speak peace to his people; therefore, saith David, 'I will listen to what Jehovah speaketh.' Oliver, in straits and defeats, especially at His-

* Callender, p. 75.

paniola, desired all to speak and declare freely what they thought the mind of God was. H. Vane (then laid by) wrote his discourse, entitled "A Healing Question," but for touching upon (that *noli me tangere*) State sins, H. Vane went prisoner to Carisbrook Castle, in the Isle of Wight. Oh, Sir, I humbly subscribe (*ex animo*) to your short and long prayer, in your letter. The Lord keep us from our own deceivings. I know there have been, and are, many precious and excellent spirits amongst you, (if you take flight before me, I will then say you are one of them, without daubing,) but *rebus sic stantibus*, as the wind blows, the united colonies dare not permit, *candida et bona fide*, two dangerous (supposed) enemies: 1. dissenting and nonconforming worshippers, and 2. liberty of free (really free) disputes, debates, writing, printing, &c.; the Most High hath begun and given some taste of these two dainties in some parts, and will more and more advance them when (as Luther and Erasmus to the Emperor, Charles V., and the Duke of Saxony,) those two gods are famished, the Pope's crown and the Monks' bellies. The same Luther was wont to say, that every man had a pope in his belly, and Calvin expressly wrote to Melancthon, that Luther made himself another Pope; yet, which of us will not say, Jeremiah, thou liest, when he tells us (and from God) we must not go down to Egypt?

"Sir, I use a bolder pen to your noble spirit than to many, because the Father of Lights hath shown your soul more of the mysteries of iniquity than other excellent heads and hearts dream of, and because, whatever you or I be in other respects, yet in this you will act a pope, and grant me your love, pardon and indulgence.

"Sir, since the doleful news from Springfield, here it is said that Philip, with a strong body of many hundred cutthroats, steers for Providence and Seekonk, some say for Norwich and Stonington, and some say your forces have had a loss by their cutting off some of your men, in their passing over a river. *Fiat voluntas Dei*, there I humbly rest, and let all go but himself. Yet, Sir, I am requested by our Capt. Fenner to give you notice, that at his farm, in the woods, he had it from a native, that Philip's great design is (among all other possible advantages and treacheries) to draw C. Mosely and others, your forces, by train-

ing and drilling and seeming flights, into such places as are full of long grass, flags, sedge, &c. and then inviron them round with fire, smoke and bullets. Some say no wise soldier will so be caught; but as I told the young prince, on his return lately from you, all their war is commootin; they have commootined our houses, our cattle, our heads, &c., and that not by their artillery, but our weapons; that yet they were so cowardly, that they have not taken one poor fort from us in all the country, nor won, nor scarce fought, one battle since the beginning. I told him and his men, being then in my canoe, with his men with him, that Philip was his cawkakinnamuck, that is, looking glass. He was deaf to all advice, and now was overset, Cooshkowwawy, and catcht at every part of the country to save himself, but he shall never get ashore, &c. He answered me in a consenting, considering kind of way, Philip Cooshkowwawy: I went with my great canoe to help him over from Seekonk (for to Providence no Indian comes) to Pawtuxet side. I told him I would not ask him news, for I knew matters were private; only I told him that if he were false to his engagements, we would pursue them with a winter's war, when they should not, as musketoes and rattlesnakes in warm weather, bite us, &c.

"Sir, I carried him and Mr. Smith a glass of wine, but Mr. Smith not coming, I gave wine and glass to himself, and a bushel of apples to his men, and being therewith (as beasts are) caught, they gave me leave to say any thing, acknowledged loudly your great kindness in Boston, and mine, and yet Capt. Fenner told me yesterday, that he thinks they will prove our worst enemies at last. I am between fear and hope, and humbly wait, making sure, as Haselrig's motto was, sure of my anchor in heaven, *Tantum in Coelis*, only in heaven. Sir, there I long to meet you.

"Your most unworthy,
ROGER WILLIAMS.

"To Mrs. Leverett, and other honored and beloved friends, humble respects, &c.

"Sir, I hope your men fire all the woods before them, &c.

"Sir, I pray not a line to me, except on necessary business; only give me leave (as you do) to use my foolish boldness to visit yourself, as I have occasion. I would not add to your troubles."

The war occasioned great alarm and distress. It spread over New-England, and threatened, for a while, the destruction of the colonies.

Many of the inhabitants of Providence and of other towns removed to Newport, for safety; but a considerable number remained, among whom was Mr. Williams, though it seems his wife and family removed to the island.*

Mr. Williams was very active, notwithstanding his age. He accepted a military commission, and the title, "Captain Roger Williams," appears on the records. It certainly displayed spirit and patriotism in a man of seventy-seven years, to buckle on his armor for the defence of his home and his fellow-citizens. He sent the following proposition to the town: "I pray the town, in the sense of the late bloody practices of the natives, to give leave to so many as can agree with William Field, to bestow some charge upon fortifying his house, for security to women and children. Also to give me leave, and so many as shall agree, to put up some defence on the hill, between the mill and the highway, for the like safety of the women and children in that part of the town." This proposal was signed by eleven persons, who subscribed various sums, to defray the expense. The highest subscription was two pounds, six shillings, except that of Mr. Williams, which was ten pounds, though we may presume that he was not the richest man among them.

A garrison was established at Providence, by the General Assembly, with seven men, under the command of Captain Arthur Fenner, with a provision, however, that it should "not eclipse Captain Williams' power in the exercise of the train bands there."

The town was attacked by the Indians, on the 29th of March, 1676, and twenty-nine houses were burnt, among which was that, in which the records of the town were

* The following memorandum appears on the records of Providence, about August 30, 1676, after the death of Philip:

"By God's providence, it seasonably came to pass, that Providence Williams brought up his mother from Newport in his sloop, and cleared the town by his vessel of all the Indians, to the great peace and content of all the inhabitants." The Indians, here mentioned, were probably prisoners.

kept. These were thrown into the mill-pond, and afterwards recovered, though much injured.

It is said, that when the Indians approached Providence, Mr. Williams took his staff, and went to meet them on the heights north of the cove. He remonstrated with the sachems, and warned them of the power and vengeance of the English. "Massachusetts," said he, "can raise thousands of men at this moment, and if you kill them, the King of England will supply their place as fast as they fall." "Well," answered one of the chieftains, "let them come. We are ready for them. But as for you, brother Williams, you are a good man. You have been kind to us many years. Not a hair of your head shall be touched."*

We cannot narrate the incidents of this dreadful war. The Indians suffered a severe defeat, December 19, 1675, at the capture of their fort, situated in a swamp in the present town of South-Kingstown. In the battle, about a thousand of the Indians are supposed to have been killed, and about two hundred of the whites, including six captains.

Philip was finally killed, August 12, 1676, near Mount Hope, by an Indian, under the command of Col. Church. The war now closed. It decided the fate of the New-England Indians. The Pokanokets were nearly exterminated. The Narragansets never recovered from the blow. Thousands of the natives were killed, and many who were made prisoners, were sent out of the country and sold as slaves.

But the victory was dearly bought by the colonists. Their whole disposable force was put in requisition. Thirteen towns were entirely destroyed by the Indians; six hundred dwelling-houses were burnt, and about the same number of the colonists, including twelve captains, were killed, so that almost every family lost a relative. The destruction of property, and the cost of the war, were immense. The disbursements of the colonies were estimated at one hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling.†

The terror and distress which this war produced may

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* Baylies' History of Plymouth, part iii. p. 114. Thatcher's Indian Biography, vol. i. p. 309. Backus, vol. i. p. 424.

† Thatcher's Indian Biography, vol. i. p. 162. Morton, Appendix A. A. p. 425.

explain, if they cannot justify, many acts of the whites. The body of Philip was treated with an indignity, which dishonored his captors. His head was sent to Plymouth, where it was exposed on a gibbet, and his hand was sent to Boston. His little son was taken prisoner, and several of the divines were of opinion, that he ought to be put to death, on the strength of Jewish precedents; but he was spared, only to be sold as a slave in Bermuda.

At Providence, the following occurrence took place, in August, after the death of Philip:

"August 25. One Chuff, an Indian, so called in time of peace, because of his surliness against the English, could scarcely come in, being wounded some few days before, by Providence men. His wounds were corrupted and stank, and because he had been a ringleader all the war to most of the mischiefs to our houses and cattle, and what English he could, the inhabitants of the town cried out for justice against him, threatening themselves to kill him, if the authority did not. For which reason the Captain Roger Williams caused the drum to be beat, the town council and council of war to be called. All called for justice and execution. The council of war gave sentence, and he was shot to death, to the great satisfaction of the town."

At a town meeting, August 14, 1676, a list was made of persons "who stayed and went not away," and to these persons, it was judged, certain Indians, who were captives, ought to be delivered as slaves, or servants, for a term of years. A committee was appointed on the subject, who presented the following report:

"*Report of the Committee on sale of Indians.*

"We, whose names are underwritten, being chosen by the town, to set the disposal of the Indians now in town, we agree, that Roger Williams, Nathan Waterman, Thomas Fenner, Henry Ashton, John Mowry, Daniel Abbott, James Olney, Valentine Whitman, John Whipple, sen., Ephraim Pray, John Pray, John Angell, James Angell, Thomas Arnold, Abraham Mann, Thomas Field, Edward Bennett, Thomas Clements, William Lancaster, William Hopkins, William Hawkins, William Harris, Zachariah Field, Samuel Winsor, and Captain Fenner, shall have each a

whole share in the product. Joseph Woodward, and Richard Pray, each three fourths of a share. John Smith, miller, Edward Smith, Samuel Whipple, Nelle Whipple, and Thomas Walim, each half share.

"Inhabitants wanting to have Indians at the price they sell at Rhode-Island or elsewhere :

"All under five years, to serve till thirty; above five and under ten, till twenty-eight; above ten to fifteen, till twenty-seven; above fifteen to twenty, till twenty-six years; from twenty to thirty, shall serve eight years; all above thirty, seven years.

ROGER WILLIAMS, THOMAS FIELD,
THOMAS HARRIS, sen. JOHN WHIPPLE, jr.
THOMAS ANGELL, (his mark.)
August 14, 1676."

We cannot, at this day, determine, fairly, the question, how far the sale of the Indian captives was necessary or just. It is, however, painful to our feelings; and we cannot but be surprised and sorry, to see the name of Roger Williams connected with such a transaction.

In May, 1677, Mr. Williams was elected an Assistant, but he declined, on account, probably, of his age. About this time, he wrote thus to the town of Providence: "I pray the town, that the place of meeting be certain, and some course settled for payment; that the clerk and sergeant be satisfied, according to moderation, that the town business may go on cheerfully; that the business of the rate (paid by so many already) be finished; that the old custom of order be kept in our meetings, and those unruly be reproved, or upon obstinacy, cast out from sober and free men's company; that our ancient use of arbitration be brought into esteem again; that (it being constantly reported, that Connecticut is upon the gaining of his Majesty's consent to *enslave us to their parish worship*) we consider what we ought to do."*

In October, 1677, commissioners from the several colonies met at Providence, to settle the long contested disputes between Mr. Harris and others about lands. Mr. Harris laid before the Court a long statement, in which he pre-

* Backus, vol. i. p. 466.

ferred heavy charges against Mr. Williams, and the latter made counter statements, in a similar style. The result of the examination was favorable to the claims of Mr. Harris and his friends, who obtained five verdicts from a jury. But the disputes were not settled, till more than thirty years afterwards.* Our limits do not allow us to enter into particulars, which could not be detailed without a tedious and unprofitable prolixity. They properly belong to a history of the State.

Of the few last years of Mr. Williams' life, we have scanty notices. The following letter† contains a reference to his age and health, and is a specimen of his constant zeal to serve his friends:

"*Narraganset*, 21 *July*, 1679, (*ut vulgo.*)

"Roger Williams, of Providence, in the Narraganset Bay, in New-England, being (by God's mercy) the first beginner of the mother town of Providence, and of the colony of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, being now near to fourscore years of age, yet (by God's mercy) of sound understanding and memory; do humbly and faithfully declare, that Mr. Richard Smith, senior, who for his conscience to God left fair possessions in Glocestershire, and adventured, with his relations and estate, to New-England, and was a most acceptable inhabitant, and a prime leading man in Taunton and Plymouth colony; for his conscience sake, many differences arising, he left Taunton and came to the Narraganset country, where, (by God's mercy and the favor of the Narraganset sachems) he broke the ice at his great charge and hazard, and put up in the thickest of the barbarians, the first English house amongst them. 2. I humbly testify, that about forty years from this date, he kept possession, coming and going himself, children

* Mr. Harris soon after went to England, on this business, but the vessel was captured by an Algerine or Tunisian corsair, and he was sold for a slave. His family, in Rhode-Island, redeemed him, by the sale of a part of his property. He arrived in England, but died there. He was an able man, and we may hope, a good man, notwithstanding some infirmities. His quarrels with Roger Williams were very discreditable to them both. On which side the most blame lay, we cannot now decide.

† Backus, vol. i. p. 421.

and servants, and he had quiet possession of his housing, lands and meadow; and there, in his own house, with much serenity of soul and comfort, he yielded up his spirit to God, (the Father of spirits) in peace. 3. I do humbly and faithfully testify as abovesaid, that since his departure, his honored son, Capt. Richard Smith, hath kept possession, (with much acceptance with English and pagans) of his father's housing, lands and meadows, with great improvement also by his great cost and industry. And in the late bloody Pagan war, I knowingly testify and declare, that it pleased the Most High to make use of himself in person, his housing, goods, corn, provisions and cattle, for a garrison and supply for the whole army of New-England, under the command of the ever to be honored General Winslow, for the service of his Majesty's honor and country of New-England. 4. I do also humbly declare, that the said Capt. Richard Smith, junior, ought, by all the rules of equity, justice and gratitude, (to his honored father and himself) to be fairly treated with, considered, recruited, honored, and, by his Majesty's authority, confirmed and established in a peaceful possession of his father's and his own possessions in this pagan wilderness, and Narraganset country. The premises I humbly testify, as now leaving this country and this world.

ROGER WILLIAMS."

The following note was directed to Mr. Daniel Abbott, the town clerk of Providence.* The "considerations presented touching rates," seem to have accompanied it. They deserve to be preserved, for many reasons. They show the unabated zeal of Mr. Williams, for the public welfare. The opposition to the payment of taxes was a sore evil, which he often mentioned and condemned:

"My good friend, loving remembrance to you. It has

* In 1679, a fine of five shillings was enacted for "riding gallop in Providence street." This implies, that the town was becoming populous again, after the Indian war, during which it suffered much. Previously to the war it contained about 500 inhabitants, but many of them removed to Newport. A rate of sixty pounds, ordered in 1679, was apportioned thus: Newport, eighteen; Portsmouth, eleven; Providence, four; Warwick, four; Westerly, four; New-Shoreham, four· Kingstown, six; East-Greenwich, three; Jamestown, six.

pleased the Most High and Only Wise, to stir up your spirit to be one of the chiefest stakes in our poor hedge. I, therefore, not being able to come to you, present you with a few thoughts about the great stumbling-block, to them that are willing to stumble and trouble themselves, our rates. James Matison had one copy of me, and Thomas Arnold another. This I send to yourself and the town, (for it may be I shall not be able to be at meeting.) I am grieved that you do so much service for so bad recompense; but I am persuaded you shall find cause to say, the Most High God of recompense, who was Abraham's great reward, hath paid me.

Considerations presented touching rates.

"1. Government and order in families, towns, &c. is the ordinance of the Most High, Rom. 13, for the peace and good of mankind. 2. Six things are written in the hearts of all mankind, yea, even in pagans: 1st. That there is a Deity; 2d. That some actions are nought; 3d. That the Deity will punish; 4th. That there is another life; 5th. That marriage is honorable; 6th. That mankind cannot keep together without some government. 3. There is no Englishman in his Majesty's dominions or elsewhere, who is not forced to submit to government. 4. There is not a man in the world, except robbers, pirates and rebels, but doth submit to government. 5. Even robbers, pirates and rebels themselves cannot hold together, but by some law among themselves and government. 6. One of these two great laws in the world must prevail, either that of judges and justices of peace in courts of peace, or the law of arms, the sword and blood. 7. If it comes from the courts of trials of peace, to the trial of the sword and blood, the conquered is forced to seek law and government. 8. Till matters come to a settled government, no man is ordinarily sure of his house, goods, lands, cattle, wife, children or life. 9. Hence is that ancient maxim, *It is better to live under a tyrant in peace, than under the sword, or where every man is a tyrant.* 10. His Majesty sends governors to Barbadoes, Virginia, &c. but to us he shews greater favor in our charter, to choose whom we please. 11. No charters are obtained without great suit, favor or charges. Our first cost a hundred pounds (though I never received it all;) our second about a thousand; Connecticut about six thou-

sand, &c. 12. No government is maintained without tribute, custom, rates, taxes, &c. 13. Our charter excels all in New-England, or *in the world, as to the souls of men.* 14. It pleased God, Rom. 13, to command tribute, custom, and consequently rates, not only for fear, but for conscience sake. 15. Our rates are the least, by far, of any colony in New-England. 16. There is no man that hath a vote in town or colony, but *he hath a hand in making the rates by himself or his deputies.* 17. In our colony the General Assembly, Governor, magistrates, deputies, towns, town-clerks, raters, constables, &c. have done their duties, the failing lies upon particular persons. 18. It is but folly to resist, (one or more, and if one, why not more?) God hath stirred up the spirit of the Governor, magistrates and officers, driven to it by necessity, to be unanimously resolved to see the matter finished; and it is the duty of every man to maintain, encourage, and strengthen the hand of authority. 19. Black clouds (some years) have hung over Old and New-England heads. God hath been wonderfully patient and long-suffering to us; but who sees not changes and calamities hanging over us? 20. All men fear, that this blazing herald from heaven* denounceth from the Most High, wars, pestilence, famines; is it not then our wisdom to make and keep peace with God and man?

"Your old unworthy servant,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"*Providence*, 15*th Jan.* 1680–1, (*so called.*)"

The following letter to Governor Bradstreet,† of Massachusetts, contains a notice of Mr. Williams' health, and other interesting topics:

"To my much honored, kind friend, the Gov. Bradstreet, at Boston, present.

"*Providence*, 6 *May*, 1682, (*ut vulgo.*)

"Sir,

"Your person and place are born to trouble as the sparks fly upward; yet I am grieved to disturb your thoughts or

* Referring to the great comet of 1680, which was supposed to have approached so near to the sun, as to be heated two thousand times hotter than red hot iron.

† 2 His. Col. viii. p. 196.

hands with any thing from me, and yet am refreshed with the thought, that sometimes you subscribe [your willing servant:] and that your love and willingness will turn to your account also.

"Sir, by John Whipple of Providence, I wrote lately (though the letter lay long by him) touching the widow Messinger's daughter, Sarah Weld, of Boston, whom I believe Joseph Homan, of Boston, hath miserably deluded, slandered, oppressed (her and his child) by barbarous inhumanity, so that I humbly hope your mercy and justice will gloriously in public kiss each other.

"Sir, this enclosed tells you that being old and weak and bruised (with rupture and colic) and lameness on both my feet, I am directed, by the Father of our spirits, to desire to attend his infinite Majesty with a poor mite, (which makes but two farthings.) By my fire-side I have recollected the discourses which (by many tedious journeys) I have had with the scattered English at Narraganset, before the war and since. I have reduced them unto those twenty two heads, (enclosed) which is near thirty sheets of my writing: I would send them to the Narragansets and others; there is no controversy in them, only an endeavor of a particular match of each poor sinner to his Maker. For printing, I am forced to write to my friends at Massachusetts, Connecticut, Plymouth, and our own colony, that he that hath a shilling and a heart to countenance and promote such a soul work, may trust the great Paymaster (who is beforehand with us already) for an hundreth for one in this life. Sir, I have many friends at Boston, but pray you to call in my kind friends Capt. Brattle and Mr. Seth Perry, who may, by your wise discretions, ease yourself of any burthen. I write to my honored acquaintance at Roxbury, Mr. Dudley and Mr. Eliot, and Mr. Stoughton, at Dorchester, and to Capt. Gookins, at Cambridge, and pray yourself and him to consult about a little help from Charlestown, where death has stript me of all my acquaintance. Sir, if you can return that chapter of my reply to G——ton, concerning New-England, I am advised to let it sleep, and forbear public contests with Protestants, since it is the design of hell and Rome to cut the throats of all the protestors in the world. Yet I am occasioned, in this book, to say much for the honor and peace of New-England.

"Sir, I shall humbly wait for your advice where it may be best printed, at Boston or Cambridge, and for how much, the printer finding paper. We have tidings here of Shaftsbury's and Howard's beheading, and contrarily, their release, London manifestations of joy, and the King's calling a Parliament. But all these are but sublunaries, temporaries and trivials. Eternity (O eternity!) is our business, to which end I am most unworthy to be

"Your willing and faithful servant,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"My humble respects to Mrs. Bradstreet, and other honored friends."

The foregoing letter furnishes proof, that Mr. Williams, even after Philip's war, and consequently after he had passed his 77th year, went to Narraganset, and delivered discourses. His zeal for the salvation of men was not extinguished by his age, nor was he prevented from efforts to save them, by his theory respecting the ministry. That zeal is displayed in his desire to print these discourses, after disease confined him to his home. The letter, too, leads us to infer his poverty. He would not, probably, have solicited aid to print so small a work, if he had possessed the means. His son's letter, quoted in a preceding page,* intimates, that Mr. Williams was dependent on his children, to some extent, at least, during the last years of his life. Poverty was honorable in a man, who had spent his best days in the public service, and who had been more intent on making others happy, than on the promotion of his own private interests.

Of the immediate cause and exact time of Mr. Williams' death, we are not informed. It is certain, however, that he died, at some time between January 16, 1682–3, and May 10, 1683. On the former day, he signed a document which was intended as a settlement of the controversy respecting the Pawtuxet lands. On the 10th of May, Mr. John Thornton wrote to the Rev. Samuel Hubbard, from Providence: "The Lord hath arrested by death our ancient and approved friend, Mr. Roger Williams, with divers others here."† He was in the 84th year of his age. It

* Page 110.

† Backus, vol. i. p. 515.

would be gratifying to have some account of his last hours, but we have every reason to believe, that his end was peace. He "was buried," says Mr. Callender (p. 93,) "with all the solemnity the colony was able to show." His remains were deposited, in his own family burying-ground, on his town-lot, a short distance only from the place where he landed, and from the spot where his dwelling-house stood. His wife probably survived him,* and all his children, it is believed, were living at his death.†

Thus terminated the long and active life of the founder of Rhode-Island, fifty-two years of which elapsed, after his arrival in America. It now remains, to present a summary view of his writings, and some comments on his character.

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* She was certainly alive in November, 1679.—Backus, vol. i. p. 478.

† See Appendix H. for some account of his grave, and of his family.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Mr. Williams' writings—Key—Bloody Tenet—liberty of conscience —Mr. Cotton's Reply—Mr. Williams' Rejoinder.

Our examination of the writings of Mr. Williams must be brief. Sufficient specimens of his style have been given in the preceding pages. We shall, therefore, present no extracts from his books, except such as may be necessary to explain their character, or to illustrate his principles.

His first printed book was his Key. The title page is in these words: "A Key into the Language of America, or a Help to the Language of the Natives, in that part of America called New-England; together with brief Observations of the Customs, Manners and Worships, &c. of the aforesaid Natives, in Peace and War, in Life and Death. On all which are added, Spiritual Observations, general and particular, by the Author, of chief and special use (upon all occasions) to all the English inhabiting those Parts; yet pleasant and profitable to the View of all Men. By Roger Williams, of Providence, in New-England. London. Printed by Gregory Dexter, 1643."

It was dedicated "to my dear and well-beloved friends and countrymen in Old and New-England." In this dedication, he says, "This Key respects the native language of it, and happily may unlock some rarities concerning the natives themselves, not yet discovered. A little key may open a box, where lies a bunch of keys." He professes his hope, that his book may contribute to the spread of Christianity among the natives, "being comfortably persuaded, that that Father of spirits, who was graciously pleased to persuade Japhet (the Gentile) to dwell in the tents of Shem (the Jews) will, in his holy season, (I hope approaching) persuade these Gentiles of America to partake of the mercies of Europe; and then shall be fulfilled what is written by the prophet Malachi, from the rising of the sun (in Europe) to the going down of the same (in America) my name shall be great among the Gentiles."

The book is divided into thirty-two chapters, the titles

of which are, Of Salutation. Of Eating and Entertainment. Of Sleep. Of their Numbers. Of Relations and Consanguinity, &c. Of Houses, Family, &c. Of Parts of Body. Of Discourse and News. Of Time of Day. Of Seasons of the Year. Of Travel. Of the Heavenly Lights. Of the Weather. Of the Winds. Of Fowl. Of the Earth and Fruits thereof. Of Beasts and Cattle. Of the Sea. Of Fish and Fishing. Of their Nakedness and Clothing. Of their Religion, Soul, &c. Of their Government. Of their Marriages. Of their Coin. Of their Trading. Of their Debts and Trusting. Of their Hunting. Of their Sports and Gaming. Of their Wars. Of their Paintings. Of their Sickness. Of their Death and Burial.

The work is ingeniously constructed in such a manner, as to present a vocabulary of Indian words, with their significations, while valuable information is given concerning the various topics enumerated in the titles of the chapters. Appended to each chapter are some pious reflections, and a few lines of rude poetry.

An extract from the twenty-first chapter, "Of Religion, the Soul, &c." will furnish a specimen of the work.

"Manit Manittowock, God, Gods.

"Obs. He that questions whether God made the world, the Indians will teach him. I must acknowledge, I have received, in my converse with them, many confirmations of those two great points, Heb. 11 : 6. viz :

"1. That God is.

"2. That he is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek him.

"They will generally confess that God made all; but then, in special, although they deny not that Englishman's God made English men, and the heavens and earth there; yet their Gods made them, and the heaven and the earth where they dwell.

"Nummus quauna-muckqun manit. God is angry with me.

"Obs. I heard a poor Indian lamenting the loss of a child, at break of day, call up his wife and children, and all about him, to lamentation, and with abundance of tears, cry out, O, God, thou hast taken away my child! thou art

angry with me: O, turn thine anger from me, and spare the rest of my children.

"If they receive any good in hunting, fishing, harvest, &c. they acknowledge God in it.

"Yea, if it be but an ordinary accident, a fall, &c. they will say, God was angry and did it.

"Musquantum manit. God is angry.

"But herein is their misery:

"First. They branch their godhead into many gods.

"Secondly. Attribute it to creatures.

"First. Many gods: they have given me the names of thirty-seven, which I have, all which, in their solemn worships, they invocate: as,

"Kautantowwit. The great south-west god, to whose house all souls go, and from whom came their corn and beans, as they say.

Wompanand.	The eastern god.
Chekesuwand.	The western god.
Wunnanameanit.	The northern god.
Sowwanand.	The southern god.
Wetuomanit.	The house god.

"Even as the papists have their he and she saint protectors, as St. George, St. Patrick, St. Dennis, Virgin Mary, &c.

Squauanit.	The woman's god.
Muckquachuckquand.	The children's god.

"Secondly. As they have many of these feigned deities, so worship they the creatures in whom they conceive doth rest some deity:

Keesuckquand.	The sun god.
Nanepaushat.	The moon god.
Paumpagussit.	The sea.
Yotaanit.	The fire god.

"Supposing that deities be in these, &c."

"*The general Observation of Religion, &c.*

"The wandering generations of Adam's lost posterity, having lost the true and living God, their Maker, have created, out of the nothing of their own inventions, many false and feigned gods and creators.

"More particular,

"Two sorts of men shall naked stand,
Before the burning ire
Of him, that shortly shall appear,
In dreadful flaming fire.
First, millions know not God, nor for
His knowledge care to seek;
Millions have knowledge store, but, in
Obedience, are not meek.
If woe to Indians, where shall Turk,
Where shall appear the Jew?
O, where shall stand the Christian false?
O, blessed then the true."

The work displays genius, industry and benevolence. It was very valuable when it was written, and it is still one of the best works on the subject. It breathes, throughout, a spirit of piety, and it closes in the following devout strain:

"Now, to the Most High and Most Holy, Immortal, Invisible, and only wise God, who alone is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last, who was, and is, and is to come; from whom, by whom, and to whom are all things; by whose gracious assistance and wonderful supportment in so many varieties of hardship and outward miseries, I have had such converse with barbarous nations, and have been mercifully assisted, to frame this poor Key, which may (through his blessing, in his own holy season,) open a door, yea, doors of unknown mercies to us and them, be honor, glory, power, riches, wisdom, goodness and dominion ascribed by all his in Jesus Christ to eternity. Amen."

Of the original edition, the copy in the library of the Massachusetts Historical Society is probably the only one in this country. In the third and fifth volumes of the Society's Collections, first series, a large part of the work was republished. The first volume of the Collections of the Rhode-Island Historical Society contains a handsome edition of the Key, with a well written preface, and a brief memoir of the author.

His next publication was entitled "The Bloody Tenet of Persecution, for Cause of Conscience, discussed, in a Conference between Truth and Peace, who, in all tender affection, present to the High Court of Parliament (as the

result of their Discourse) these, (amongst other passages) of highest consideration. Printed in the year 1644." It was published without the name of the author.

The origin of this work was this: A person, who was confined in Newgate, on account of his religious opinions, wrote a paper against persecution. "Having not the use of pen and ink, he wrote these arguments in milk, in sheets of paper, brought to him by the woman, his keeper, from a friend in London, as the stopples of his milk bottle. In such paper, written with milk, nothing will appear; but the way of reading it by fire being known to this friend, who received the papers, he transcribed and kept together the papers." *

This essay was sent to Mr. Cotton, of Boston. He wrote a reply, of which Mr. Williams' book is an examination. Its title, "The Bloody Tenet," is a fanciful reference to the circumstance, that the original paper of the prisoner was written with milk. "These arguments against such persecution, and the answer pleading for it, written (as love hopes) from godly intentions, hearts and hands, yet in a marvellous different style and manner—the arguments against persecution in *milk*, the answer for it (as I may say) in *blood*."

The book is dedicated "To the Right Honorable, both Houses of the High Court of Parliament." After an address "To every courteous reader," and a minute table of contents, the essay of the prisoner and Mr. Cotton's reply are inserted. Then follows the main work, divided into one hundred and thirty-eight short chapters, eighty-one of which are employed in discussing Mr. Cotton's reply, and the remainder in examining "A Model of Church and Civil Power, composed by Mr. Cotton and the Ministers of New-England, and sent to the Church at Salem, as a further Confirmation of the Bloody Doctrine of Persecution for Cause of Conscience." The whole work forms a small quarto, of two hundred and forty-seven pages. A few copies exist, in the large libraries in this country.† It

* Bloody Tenet, p. 18.

† The copy now before me belongs to the library of Harvard College, having been borrowed in accordance with the very liberal regulations of that noble collection of books. This copy was presented

ought to be reprinted, and it is hoped that the Rhode-Island Historical Society will make it one of the volumes of their Collections. It is the best work of its author, and it contains a full exhibition of his principles. Its style is animated, and often beautiful.* It is in the form of a dialogue between Truth and Peace, and the colloquy is sustained with great skill. It commences thus:

"*Truth.* In what dark corner of the world (sweet Peace) are we two met? How hath this present evil world banished me from all the coasts and quarters of it, and how hath the righteous God in judgment taken thee from the earth? Rev. 6: 4.

"*Peace.* 'Tis lamentably true, (blessed Truth) the foundations of the world have long been out of course. The gates of earth and hell have conspired together to intercept our joyful meeting, and our holy kisses. With what a weary, tired wing, have I flown over nations, kingdoms, cities, towns, to find out precious Truth.

"*Truth.* The like inquiries, in my flights and travels, have I made for Peace, and still am told, she hath left the earth and fled to heaven.

"*Peace.* Dear Truth, what is the earth but a dungeon of darkness, where Truth is not?"

An analysis of this book would occupy too much space. The author himself presents a summary view of its contents in the introduction:

"First. That the blood of so many hundred thousand souls of protestants and papists, spilt in the wars of present and

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by the second Thomas Hollis, and it contains, on the title page, in his hand-writing, I presume, the words, "*A curious tract.*" It is pleasant to connect the names of Williams and Hollis.

* It was prepared under great disadvantages. He says: "When these discussions were prepared for the public, in London, his time was eaten up in attendance upon the service of the Parliament and city, for the supply of the poor of the city with wood, (during the stop of the coal from Newcastle, and the mutinies of the poor for firing.) These meditations were fitted for public view in change of rooms and corners, yea, sometimes (upon occasions of travel in the country, concerning that business of fuel,) in variety of strange houses, sometimes in the fields, in the midst of travel, where he hath been forced to gather and scatter his loose thoughts and papers." Bloody Tenet made More Bloody. p. 38.

former ages, for their respective consciences, is not required nor accepted by Jesus Christ the Prince of Peace.

"Secondly. Pregnant Scriptures and arguments are throughout the work proposed against the doctrine of persecution for cause of conscience.

"Thirdly. Satisfactory answers are given to Scriptures, and objections produced by Mr. Calvin, Beza, Mr. Cotton, and the ministers of the New English churches, and others former and later, tending to prove the doctrine of persecution for cause of conscience.

"Fourthly. The doctrine of persecution for cause of conscience, is proved guilty of all the blood of the souls crying for vengeance under the altar.

"Fifthly. All civil states, with their officers of justice, in the irrespective constitutions and administrations, are proved essentially civil, and therefore not judges, governors, or defenders of the spiritual or christian state and worship.

"Sixthly. It is the will and command of God, that since the coming of his Son, the Lord Jesus, a permission of the most Paganish, Jewish, Turkish or Antichristian consciences and worships, be granted to all men in all nations and countries: and they are to be fought against with that sword, which is only in soul matters able to conquer, to wit, the sword of God's Spirit, the word of God.

"Seventhly. The state of the land of Israel, the kings and people thereof, in peace and war, is proved figurative and ceremonial, and no pattern nor precedent for any kingdom or civil state in the world to follow.

"Eighthly. God requireth not a uniformity of religion to be enacted or enforced in any civil state; which enforced uniformity sooner or later is the greatest occasion of civil war, ravishing of conscience, persecution of Christ Jesus in his servants, and of the hypocrisy and destruction of millions of souls.

"Ninthly. In holding an enforced uniformity of religion in a civil state, we must necessarily disclaim our desires and hopes of the Jews' conversion to Christ.

"Tenthly. An enforced uniformity of religion throughout a nation or civil state, confounds the civil and religious, denies the principles of christianity and civility, and that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.

"Eleventhly. The permission of other consciences and

worships, than a state professeth, only can according to God procure a firm and lasting peace, good assurance being taken according to the wisdom of the civil state for uniformity of civil obedience from all sorts.

"Twelfthly. Lastly, true civility and christianity may both flourish in a state or kingdom, notwithstanding the permission of divers and contrary consciences, either of Jews or Gentiles."

Without examining the numerous arguments and texts, with which Mr. Williams fortifies his doctrine, we will briefly state the general principles of liberty of conscience.

All men are bound by the laws of God, and are responsible to Him for their conduct. He requires them to love, worship and obey Him. From this duty, they cannot be released. The conscience cannot be freed from this obligation. God has not granted any liberty to disobey His commands.

As God is the Supreme Ruler, He may prescribe the modes in which He chooses to be worshipped, and may enforce conformity by temporal penalties. This he did in the Jewish commonwealth. He established a system of rites, and armed the magistrate with power to coerce the consciences of the Jews. The civil sword was rightly used to maintain the national religion, because the magistrate acted in the name and by the authority of Jehovah. The destruction of several heathen nations, by the Jews, was just, because God commanded the act. He uses what instruments he pleases to punish men, and the chastisement was deserved, whether it was inflicted by the Jewish sword, or by famine or pestilence.

But since the introduction of the christian system, the case is altered. The obligation to love God and obey the Gospel, binds the conscience of every man; but he is responsible to God alone. His fellow men have no right to interfere. God has not delegated to any man this authority over the conscience.

All human laws, therefore, which either prescribe or prohibit certain doctrines or rites, that are not inconsistent with the civil peace, are unjust, and are an invasion of the prerogatives of God. They are consequently null and void, and no man is bound to obey them. The reasons are obvious:

Such laws are inconsistent with the spirit and letter of the New Testament. The Saviour gave no intimation to his ministers, that force should be employed in the diffusion of his Gospel. He appointed, on the contrary, the preaching of the truth, an appeal to the understandings and hearts of men, as the means by which his kingdom was to be established. His apostles accordingly went abroad among the nations, proclaiming the Gospel, and by moral suasion, endeavoring to bring men to the obedience of faith. They represented themselves to be ambassadors, commissioned to declare the will of their Sovereign, but not authorized to employ force. "We are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did *beseech* you by us, we *pray* you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we *persuade* men."* The great commission of the ministers of the Gospel is, "Go ye into all the world, and *preach the Gospel* to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."† The only legitimate means, therefore, of operating on the wills of men, in reference to religion, are the affecting truths, the precious promises, and the terrific threatenings of the word of God. These are to be presented to the minds and hearts of men, with solemnity and urgent affection; but here the agency of man ceases. If men choose to disobey the Gospel, they do it on their responsibility to God, who will bring them into judgment for the deeds done in the body.

The early believers acted on this principle; and after Christians obtained possession of the civil power, the employment of force to constrain the conscience was not introduced, till the purity of Christianity became corrupted by her alliance with the state.‡ The remark of Tertullian,§ expresses the feelings of the early Christians: "It is the natural civil right of every man to worship whatever he pleases. It is inconsistent with the nature of religion to propagate it by force, for it must be received by voluntary consent, not by coercion."

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* 2 Cor. 5: 11, 20. † Mark, 16: 16.

‡ Bishop Taylor's Liberty of Prophesying, sec. 14.

§ "Humani juris et naturalis potestatis, unicuique quod putaverit colere. Sed nec religionis est cogere religionem, quæ suscipi sponte debet, non vi."

This remark suggests another argument. Religion essentially consists in love to God. Its seat is the soul. External acts of worship are merely manifestations of this inward principle, and derive from it all their value. When they do not spring from it, they are not acceptable to God. The principle may exist, in vigor and purity, without any external expressions; and much of the intercourse of every Christian with God consists in this silent communion of his soul with the great Invisible. But, from the nature of man, he needs external modes of manifesting his feelings, in order to preserve those feelings in healthful action. God accordingly requires worship, and obedience to certain rites. The social principle is brought into action, and individual Christians increase their own strength, by union with their fellow Christians in acts of devotion.

But when force is employed, to constrain men to the performance of religious duties, the end proposed is not attained. Men may be made to assume attitudes, and to repeat words, and to visit certain places; but they cannot be forced, by human power, to love God. They cannot thus be made religious. The soul is not subject to human constraint. Men cannot penetrate the interior sanctuary, where she resides, in the awful presence of God alone. It is absurd, therefore, to attempt to accomplish, by human laws, what they are incompetent, from their nature, to effect. No legislator ever enacted a law, requiring the citizens to love the state. The law provides for the punishment of actions inconsistent with this love; but beyond the external manifestations of the inward feelings, it does not attempt to extend its jurisdiction. Laws requiring men to perform religious duties are vain, as well as unjust. They attempt an impossibility, because the duty is not performed, unless it springs from love to God; which love no human power can create in the soul.

But such laws are unjust, because God has given to men no power over the conscience, and because men cannot grant this power to each other. Civil society is necessary to the happiness of men, and a sufficient amount of power must be confided to the hands of rulers, for the protection of society. But the degree of this delegated authority is limited by its objects. The regulation of the conscience is not one of the purposes for which men combine in civil

society. The object of such a society is the promotion of civil interests. Those interests must be guarded and promoted. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness must be secured to every citizen. When these ends are attained, government has fulfilled its purpose. It has no power to dictate to the citizen, in what mode he shall pursue happiness. It cannot interfere with his domestic or social relations, unless the public welfare is injured. It cannot, above all, intrude into the hallowed asylum, where the religious affections reign. It is inconsistent with the theory of the social compact, to suppose, that men have surrendered to the state the right to control their faith,—a surrender which is not necessary to the ends for which men unite in political communities.

But if men were willing to yield this right, they could not do it. God holds every man personally responsible. Every individual must stand at the judgment seat of Christ, and give an account of his own actions. No man, therefore, can surrender to another the control over his conscience. His soul is committed to his own responsibility, and of him God will require it. He must not commit himself implicitly to the control or guidance of any man ; but, seeking for light from Heaven, he must strive for the perfection of his moral nature, and for a preparation for the eternal life beyond the grave.

The absurdity of permitting the civil magistrate to regulate the conscience, is shown by the fact, that the magistrate will make his own views the standard of orthodoxy ; and, consequently, it has happened, that successive rulers have maintained, by force, totally opposite systems of faith and practice. Mr. Williams says, on this point, "Who knows not, that within the compass of one poor span of twelve years' revolution, all England hath become from half Papist, half Protestant, to be absolute Protestants ; from absolute Protestants to be absolute Papists ; from absolute Papists, (changing as fashions) to absolute Protestants."*

The magistrate must be infallible, in order to be a safe guide to the consciences of men. This consideration is a sufficient answer to Mr. Cotton's sophism, that a man must

* Bloody Tenet, p. 185.

not be persecuted for his opinions, but he may be punished for acting in contradiction to his own conscience. But who is to be the judge? Fundamentals, says Mr. Cotton, are so clear, that a man must be criminally blind and obstinate, who does not receive and obey them. But what are these fundamentals? is a question which different magistrates will decide differently; and men may be successively rewarded and punished, by successive administrations, for the same opinions.

The great and true principle, then, is, that men are not responsible to each other, for their religious opinions or practices, as such; and that every man has a right, as a citizen, to hold any opinions, and to practise any ceremonies, which he pleases, unless he disturbs the civil peace. The duty of the magistrate, in relation to religion, consists in personal obedience to the truth, and impartial protection to all the citizens in the exercise of their religious privileges. Mr. Williams has well stated this point. In answer to the question, "What may the magistrate lawfully do with his civil power in matters of religion?" he says:

"The civil magistrate either respecteth that religion and worship, which his conscience is persuaded is true and upon which he ventures his soul; or else, that and those which he is persuaded are false. Concerning the first, if that which the magistrate believeth to be true, be true, I say he owes a three-fold duty to it.

"First, approbation and countenance, a reverent esteem and honorable testimony (according to Isaiah 49, and Rev. 31) with a tender respect of truth, and of the professors of it.

"Secondly, personal submission of his own soul to the power of the Lord Jesus, in that spiritual government and kingdom, according to Matt. 18, and 1 Cor. 5.

"Thirdly, protection of such true professors of Christ, whether apart, or met together, as also of their estates, from violence or injury, according to Rom. 13.

"Now, secondly, if it be a false religion (unto which the civil magistrate dare not adjoin,) yet he owes:

"First, *permission* (for *approbation* he owes not to what is evil) and thus according to Matthew 13: 30, for public peace and quiet sake.

"Secondly, he owes protection to the persons of his subjects (though of a false worship) that no injury be offered either to the persons or goods of any. Rom. 13."*

It follows, from this last position, that no man can be lawfully compelled to support a system of worship which he disapproves; for this is, in effect, to tax and punish him for his religious opinions.

The duty of the magistrate is thus very clear. With the religious opinions or practices of the citizens, he has no concern. They are not civil matters, which, alone, come within his cognizance. If a man's religious views lead him to actions which injure society, those actions become civil offences, and are within the jurisdiction of the magistrate, who is appointed to guard the interests of the civil community. If a company of Hindoos should remove to Boston, and should erect a temple to Juggernaut, they ought to be protected in their worship, if they confined themselves to such acts, as made no disturbance, and violated no civil law. If, however, they should attempt to drag the idol through the streets, the magistrates ought to interfere. If they should sacrifice one of their children, the perpetrators ought to be tried and punished for murder. If a man violates the third commandment, in such a way as to disturb the community, he may be punished, though experience has proved, that it is not wise to enforce laws against blasphemy. If a man breaks the fourth commandment, by actions which interrupt or disturb the devotions of others, the law may restrain and punish him, not for the breach of the commandment, but for interfering with the religious privileges of other citizens. If a man chose to labor on the Sabbath, on his farm or in his shop, the law could not rightfully interfere; but if by his labor he disturbed the devotions of his neighbors, he might be restrained; though, here, too, experience proves, that the interference of the law is odious, and seldom beneficial.

Such cases as those specified present no difficulty. There is a broad, clear line, running between religious opinions and actions. The actions, and not the opinions, are the subjects of law. If it is alleged, that the opinions necessarily lead to illegal conduct, the reply is, wait till

* Bloody Tenet, p. 214.

the actions are attempted or performed. They, then, come within the cognizance of civil law. If, indeed, a case could be supposed to happen, in which a religious sect avowed it as their creed, that they were required, or permitted, to murder their fellow-citizens, or burn their dwellings, the magistrates would be bound to take the necessary precautions to prevent such results. In such a case, the creed would involve a criminal design, against which the community would have a right to guard itself; but the mere design could not be punished; just as a purpose to commit murder cannot be punished, though it justifies the magistrate in taking measures to prevent its execution.

Liberty of conscience, however, has some limitations. It does not prohibit churches from excluding members whose opinions or conduct are inconsistent with the principles on which the church is founded. The Bible makes it the duty of churches to maintain suitable discipline. A church is a voluntary society, founded on certain fundamental rules, to which every member assents, when he enters it. If he adopts other principles, or in any way violates the rules, he makes himself liable to expulsion from the church, as from any other voluntary association.

Neither does liberty of conscience imply, that a man has a claim to our confidence, our patronage, our votes, whatever may be his religious opinions. I would not intrust my children to the care of an infidel, but I do not deprive him, by such refusal, of any right; yet a law forbidding infidels to be employed as instructors, would be unjust. I would not vote for a man holding certain principles, but I do not thereby invade his privileges, for he has no title to my vote; yet a law, making men ineligible to office, on account of certain opinions, would be an invasion of their civil rights.* Every man must bear the

* The laws, in some of our States, which make clergymen ineligible to certain civil offices, are unjust, and inconsistent with our republican institutions. Every man has equal civil rights, and the exclusion of any class of men from the enjoyment of any of those rights, is an odious proscription. It is, indeed, desirable, that no clergyman should accept a civil office, because his duties as a minister of the Gospel ought to be sufficient to occupy his mind. But he has a right, as a citizen, to be elected to any office; and to exclude

responsibility of his principles. Those principles cannot impair his positive rights; but they may, and will, affect the opinions and feelings of his fellow men. To their confidence, their patronage, or their votes, he has no natural right, and no civil injustice is done to him, if these are withheld.

We cannot prolong our remarks on this subject. It is expounded and illustrated, with much ability, learning and eloquence, in the "Bloody Tenet." Roger Williams is entitled to the honor of being the first writer, in modern times, who clearly maintained the absolute right of every man, to a "full liberty in religious concernments." Bishop Heber, in his Life of Jeremy Taylor, says, of the "Liberty of Prophesying," "It is the first attempt on record, to conciliate the minds of Christians to the reception of a doctrine, which, though now the rule of action professed by all Christian sects, was then, by every sect alike, regarded as a perilous and portentous novelty."*

Bishop Heber has here fallen into a mistake. The "Liberty of Prophesying" was published in 1647, three years after the "Bloody Tenet," in which the principles of religious liberty are more clearly and consistently maintained, than in Taylor's excellent work.† Bishop Heber admits (p. 222) that this essay "can by no means lay claim to the character which has been assigned to it, of a plea for universal toleration. The forbearance which he claims, *he claims for those Christians only, who unite in the confession of the Apostles' creed.*" Bishop Taylor himself, at the end of the sixteenth section of the work referred to, says, that "opinions are to be dealt with," if they tend to disturb the public peace, and lead to vice. "If either themselves or their doctrine do really and without color or

him is an assumption of the power to establish a national religion, for if a man may be excluded from office, because he is a minister, he may, by the same authority, be invested with office, because he is a minister. It is remarkable, that those who clamor so loudly against church and state, do not see any inconsistency in the exclusion of clergymen, as such, from office.

* Life of Jeremy Taylor, Am. ed. p. 37.

† Mr. Williams speaks of this work, in his rejoinder to Mr. Cotton's reply: "Dr. J. Taylor, what an everlasting monumental testimony did he publish to this truth, in that his excellent discourse of the Liberty of Prophesying." pp. 316–17.

feigned pretence, disturb the public peace, and just interests, they are not to be suffered." But the magistrate must judge, in this case; and, of course, the door is left wide open, for persecution. Roger Williams, on the contrary, contended, that "a permission of the most Paganish, Jewish, Turkish or Antichristian consciences and worships, be granted to all men in all nations and countries;" and he left no discretion to the magistrate to judge of opinions, any further than they should exhibit their effects in action. His principles, too, claimed for men entire *liberty of conscience*, and not merely a right to *toleration*. To tolerate implies the power to interfere, and to regulate the conscience. If there is power to *permit*, there is power to *forbid*.

The great Mr. Locke advocated the principles of religious liberty with distinguished ability, in his Letters concerning Toleration, written about the year 1690; but he maintained, by implication, that Papists ought not to be tolerated, and expressly asserted that atheists must not receive toleration.*

We may here take notice of an attempt to deprive Roger Williams and his colony of their just praise, by claiming for Lord Baltimore the priority in establishing religious liberty in Maryland. We would not detract from the merit of Lord Baltimore and his colony; but the liberty established in Maryland, though far beyond the spirit of those times, did not rise to the Rhode-Island standard. It extended only to Christians.† Lord Baltimore commenced

* Works, vol. x. pp. 45–7.

† In 1649, the Assembly of Maryland enacted, "that no persons *professing to believe in Jesus Christ*, shall be molested, in respect of their religion, or in the free exercise thereof, or be compelled to the belief or practice of any other religion, against their consent, so that they be not unfaithful to the proprietary, or conspire against the civil government. That persons molesting any other in respect of his religious tenets shall pay treble damages to the party aggrieved, and twenty shillings to the proprietary. That the reproaching any with opprobrious epithets of religious distinctions, shall forfeit ten shillings to the persons aggrieved. That any one *speaking reproachfully against the Blessed Virgin*, or the Apostles, shall forfeit five pounds, but blasphemy against God shall be punished with death." Chalmers' Pol. Ann. vol. i. p. 218. These latter provisions might easily be made terrible engines of persecution, in the hands of ill-disposed magistrates.

his settlement in 1634, and established Christianity, agreeably to the old common law, without allowing pre-eminence to any particular sect. This was wise and liberal; but Mr. Williams established his colony in 1636, two years afterwards, on the broad principle of unlimited religious freedom; and the Jew, the Mahometan or the Hindoo might have found a home in Rhode-Island, and might have enjoyed his opinions unmolested, while he fulfilled his civil duties. The first law of Maryland, respecting religious liberty, was enacted in 1649. In 1647, at the first General Assembly held in Rhode-Island, under the first charter, a code of laws was adopted, relating exclusively to civil concerns, and concluding with these words: "Otherwise than thus, what is herein forbidden, *all men may walk as their consciences persuade them, every one in the name of his God. And let the lambs of the Most High walk in this colony without molestation, in the name of Jehovah their God, forever and ever.*"* This noble provision was a part of the code; and it was not only prior in date to the law of Maryland, but it was more liberal, and more consistent with the rights of conscience.

We must now return to Mr. Williams' book. A reply was written by Mr. Cotton, and published in London, in 1647. Its title was: "The Bloody Tenet washed, and made white, in the Blood of the Lamb, being discussed and discharged of Blood-Guiltiness, by just Defence. Wherein the great Questions of this Time are handled, viz. How far Liberty of Conscience ought to be given to those that truly fear God, and how far restraint to turbulent and pestilent Persons, that not only rase the Foundation of Godliness, but disturb the civil Peace, where they live. Also, how far the Magistrates may proceed in the Duties of the first Table. And that all Magistrates ought to study the Word and Will of God, that they may frame their Government according to it. Discussed, as they are alleged, from divers Scriptures, out of the Old and New Testaments. Wherein also the Practice of Princes is debated, together with the Judgment of ancient and late Writers, of most precious Esteem. Whereunto is added, a Reply to Mr. Williams' Answer to Mr. Cotton's Letter. By John

*2 Mass. His. Col. viii. p. 79.

Cotton, Bachelor in Divinity, and Teacher of the Church of Christ, at Boston, in New-England. London, printed by Matthew Symmons, for Hannah Allen, at the Crown, in Pope's-Head Alley. 1647." The book is a small quarto, of 339 pages. It is able and learned, but it maintains the right of the magistrate to interfere, for the promotion of truth, and the suppression of error.

Mr. Williams again took up his pen, and published a rejoinder, entitled, "The Bloody Tenet yet more Bloody, by Mr. Cotton's Endeavor to wash it white in the Blood of the Lamb. Of whose precious Blood, spilt in the Blood of his Servants, and of the Blood of Millions spilt in former and later Wars for Conscience Sake, that most bloody Tenet of Persecution for Cause of Conscience, upon a second Trial, is found now more apparently and more notoriously guilty. In this Rejoinder to Mr. Cotton, are principally, I. The Nature of Persecution. II. The Power of the civil Sword in Spirituals, examined. III. The Parliament's Permission of Dissenting Consciences justified. Also, (as a Testimony to Mr. Clarke's Narrative) is added, a Letter to Mr. Endicott, Governor of the Massachusetts, in New-England. By R. Williams, of Providence, in New-England. London, printed for Giles Calvert, and are to be sold at the Black-Spread-Eagle, at the West End of Paul's, 1652." It is a small quarto, of 302 pages.*

This book discusses the same topics, as its predecessor, with additional arguments. Though the controversy was maintained with spirit, yet the tone of the book is courteous. Mr. Williams says: "The Most Holy and All-Seeing knows, how bitterly I resent [lament] the least difference with Mr. Cotton, yea with the least of the followers of Jesus, of what conscience or worship soever." He calls his book, "An Examination of the worthily honored and beloved Mr. Cotton's Reply." It would be well if all disputants cherished the same kind spirit.

The book contains an "Address to the High Court of Parliament," in which the author prays them to favor toleration, and to secure their personal salvation.

* There is a thin book, in the Library of Harvard College, which purports to be a copy of this work, but it contains only the Preface and Dedicatory Epistles.

There are also two addresses, the one "to the several respective General Courts, especially that of the Massachusetts, in New-England," and the other "To the Merciful and Compassionate Reader."

The body of the work is written, like the Bloody Tenet, in the form of a "Conference between Truth and Peace," and is divided into chapters, in each of which, for the most part, a corresponding chapter of Mr. Cotton's book is examined.

At the close of the examination, is a letter to Governor Endicott, of Massachusetts, in which Mr. Williams expresses great affection for him, alludes to former days, and exhibitions of a different spirit, intimates that the love of honor had affected the Governor, beseeches him to adopt and practise the principles of toleration, and assures him, that if he should follow out his principles he must proceed to bloodshed. This prediction was soon after fulfilled in the execution of the Quakers.

In an appendix, is an address "To the Clergy of the four great Parties (professing the name of Christ Jesus) in England, Scotland and Ireland, viz. the Popish, Prelatical, Presbyterian and Independent." It is mild and respectful, though it accuses them all of persecuting each other, when they possessed the power. He says: "Just like two men, whom I have known break out to blows and wrestling, so have the Protestant Bishops wrestled with the Popish, and the Popish with the Protestant, the Presbyterian with the Independent, and the Independent with the Presbyterian. And our chronicles and experiences have told this nation and the world, how he whose turn it is to be brought under, hath ever felt a heavy, wrathful hand of an unbrotherly and unchristian persecution," (p. 316.) He says, that they all pleaded for freedom when they were persecuted, and adds, "What excellent subscriptions to this soul freedom are interwoven in many passages of the late King's book (if his.)"*

* Alluding to the "Eikon Basilike," a book, which purported to have been written by Charles I. and which, it is thought, contributed to the restoration of his son. It was, however, an imposition, Dr. Gauden being the real author. Mr. Williams, it seems had sagacity enough to doubt its authenticity. Milton assailed it with his "Eiconoclastes."

He alludes to the ejected clergy, and makes the following appeal, which is very honorable to his feelings:—"I make another humble plea (and that, I believe, with all the reason and justice in the world) that such who are ejected, undone, impoverished, might, some way, from the state or you, receive relief and succor; considering that the very nation's constitution hath occasioned parents to train up, and persons to give themselves to studies (though, in truth, but in a way of trading and bargaining before God) yet it is according to the custom of the nation, who ought, therefore, to share also in the fault of such parents and ministers, who, in all changes, are ejected." How different is this language from that of a rash, proscriptive reformer, who, in his zeal for what he esteems right, disregards every consideration of justice or humanity! The clergy whom Mr. Williams had especially in view were the Episcopal ministers, who had been expelled from their benefices. He did not believe them, in general, to be fit to preach, but he wished them to be treated with kindness and liberality.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Hireling Ministry none of Christ's—the ministry—controversy with George Fox—other writings—character as a writer—his general character.

In the same year, 1652, in which the last mentioned book was published, Mr. Williams printed a pamphlet, with the title, "The Hireling Ministry none of Christ's, or a Discourse touching the Propagating the Gospel of Christ Jesus. Humbly presented to such pious and honorable hands, whom the present debate thereof concerns. By Roger Williams, of Providence, in New-England. London. Printed in the second month." It is a small quarto, of thirty-six pages. No copy is known to the writer to exist in this country, except in the Library of the American Antiquarian Society, in Worcester, which contains a duplicate. One of the copies was loaned to the author, by the politeness of the Librarian.

This pamphlet is valuable, because it contains a more clear exposition of Mr. Williams' views respecting the ministry, than any other of his works. It begins with an "Epistle Dedicatory, to all such honorable and pious hands, whom the present debate touching the propagating of Christ's Gospel concerns; and to all such gentle Bereans, who, with ingenious civility, desire to search, whether what's presented concerning Christ Jesus be so or not." In this epistle, the author says, "I have not been altogether a stranger to the learning of the Egyptians, and have trod the hopefullest paths to worldly preferment, which, for Christ's sake, I have forsaken. I know what it is to study, to preach, to be an elder, to be applauded, and yet also what it is to tug at the oar, to dig with the spade and plough, and to labor and travel day and night, amongst English, amongst barbarians."

The chief purpose of the work is, to oppose a legal establishment of religion, and the compulsory support of the clergy.

The principal points maintained are three: 1. There is

now no ministry, which is authorized to preach to the heathen, or to exercise pastoral functions. 2. There ought to be a perfect liberty to all men to maintain such worship and ministry as they please. 3. Ministers ought be supported, by voluntary donations, and not by legal provision.

1. On the first point, he partially stated his views, in his preceding works on the Bloody Tenet; but in this pamphlet, he expounds them more fully. His opinions appear to have rested entirely on a misconception of passages in the Revelations. He believed, that the "white troopers" mentioned in the 6th and 19th chapters of Revelations, were the true ministers, and that they were utterly routed, till after the slaying of the witnesses and their resurrection. "The apostolical commission and ministry is long since interrupted and discontinued, yet ever since the beast Antichrist rose, the Lord Jesus hath stirred up the ministry of prophecy, who must continue their witness and prophecy, until their witness be finished, and slaughters, probably near approaching, be accomplished." "In the poor small span of my life, I desired to have been a diligent and constant observer, and have been myself many ways engaged, in city, in country, in court, in schools, in universities, in churches, in Old and New-England; and yet cannot, in the holy presence of God, bring in the result of a satisfying discovery, that either the begetting ministry of the apostles or messengers to the churches, or the feeding and nourishing ministry of pastors and teachers, according to the first institution of the Lord Jesus, are yet restored and extant."—p. 4.

In his "Bloody Tenet made more Bloody," he says, that "Christ Jesus sends out preachers three ways: 1st. In his own person, as the twelve and seventy. 2dly. By his visible, kingly power, left in the hands of his true churches, and the officers and governors thereof. 3dly. Christ Jesus, as King of the Church and Head of his body, during the distractions of his house and kingdom, under Antichrist's apostacy, immediately by his own Holy Spirit, stirs up and sends out those fiery witnesses to testify against Antichrist and his several abominations."—p. 99.

He says, in the work before us: "All (of what rank soever) that have knowledge and utterance of heavenly mysteries, and therein are the Lord's prophets and witnesses

against Antichrist, must prophesy against false Christs, false faith, false love, false joy, false worship and ministrations, false hope and false Heaven, which poor souls in a golden dream expect and look for.

"This prophecy ought to be (chiefly) exercised among the saints, in the companies, meetings and assemblies of the fellow-mourners, and witnesses against the falsehoods of Antichrist. If any come in (as 1 Cor: 14,) yea, if they come to *catch*, God will graciously more or less vouchsafe to *catch them*, if he intends to save them.

"But for the going out to the nations, cities, towns, as to the nations, cities, and towns of the world, unconverted, until the downfal of the Papacy, (Rev. 18,) and so the mounting of the Lord Jesus and his white troopers again (Rev. 19, &c.) for the going out to preach upon hire; for the going out to convert sinners, and yet to hold communion with them as saints in prayer; for the going out without such a powerful call from Christ, as the twelve and the seventy had, or without such suitable gifts as the first ministry was furnished with, and this especially without a due knowledge of the prophecies to be fulfilled, I have no faith to act, nor in the actings and ministries of others." —pp. 21, 22.

He avers, nevertheless, that he had strong desires to labor for the good of all men: "By the merciful assistance of the Most High, I have desired to labor in Europe, in America, with English, with Barbarians, yea, and also, I have longed after some trading with the Jews themselves, for whose hard measure, I fear the nations and England hath yet a score to pay."—p. 13. He states his opinion, however, that no remarkable conversion of the nations is yet to be expected, because smoke filled the temple till Antichrist was overthrown. Rev. 15: 8.

In the "Bloody Tenet made more Bloody," he says, on this subject, that though he approved endeavors to teach the Indians, yet, "that any of the ministers spoken of are furnished with true apostolical commission (Matt. 28,) I see not, for these reasons: 1st. The ordinary ministry, is not the apostolical, Eph. 4. 1 Cor. 12. 2dly. The churches of New-England are not pure churches. 3dly. Men cannot preach to the Indians in any propriety of their speech or language."—p. 219.

These extracts sufficiently explain his views. It is re-

markable, that a man, whose mind was so strong and clear, on most subjects, should become perplexed with such difficulties, in relation to the ministry and the church. That the passages in the Apocalypse, to which he refers, do not authorize his conclusions, we need not attempt to prove. He might well deny, that most of the communities which then claimed to be Christian churches, were entitled to the name; and might, with truth, maintain, that a large proportion of those who professed, at that time, to be ministers of Christ, were not sanctioned by his commission. But it did not follow, that no church, formed according to the models furnished in the New Testament, then existed, and that no true ministers could be found. A company of true believers, united in one society, for worship, for mutual watchfulness, for the maintenance of discipline, and for the celebration of the ordinances, is a church. A pious man, who can teach others, and who is moved, by a proper conviction of duty, and is authorized by a church, to preach the Gospel, is a duly appointed minister. It is manifest, from the tenor of the New Testament, that an order of ministers was intended to be continued. The same ends for which the first ministers were appointed,—the conversion of the impenitent, and the edification of believers,—still require, that ministers be employed in the work of spreading and upholding Christianity. The same means are to be employed,—the declaration of divine truth. The supernatural gifts of the first ministers were necessary, as an attestation of the truth of Christianity; but it was not by the miracles, but by the truth, accompanied by the influences of the Holy Spirit, that men were converted. The experience of modern missions demonstrates, that men can learn to speak "with propriety" the languages of the heathen, and that the Gospel, when preached now, in Burmah, or in Hindostan, or in Greenland, or in our western forests, is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. 1 : 16.

But it is needless to argue a point, so clear as this. Mr. Williams' erroneous views on the subject before us, did not affect his feelings on the great question of religious liberty. He was willing, that others should establish churches and maintain ministers, if they chose. This is the second point which we mentioned.

2. He says, "I desire not that liberty to myself, which I would not freely and impartially weigh out to all the consciences of the world beside. And, therefore, I do humbly conceive, that it is the will of the Most High, and the express and absolute duty of the civil powers, to proclaim an absolute freedom in all the three nations, yea, in all the world, (were their power so large) that each town and division of people, yea, and each person, may freely enjoy what worship, what ministry, what maintenance to afford them, their soul desireth."—p. 19. In a subsequent page, he adds: "All these consciences (yea, the very consciences of the Papists, Jews, &c. as I have proved at large in my answer to Master Cotton's washings) ought freely and impartially to be permitted their several respective worships, their ministers of worships, and what way of maintaining them, they freely choose."

3. On the subject of maintenance, he strongly objects to a "stated salary," by which he evidently means a stipend, fixed and raised by law. He contends, that ministers ought to be supported, like the first preachers, by voluntary donations. He does not fully explain his views, but it does not appear, that he had any objection to a fixed sum, or to any particular mode of collecting it, provided that it was voluntarily paid. The compulsory maintenance of the clergy, by tithes, and other modes of taxation, without any concurrence of the persons taxed, was the system against which he argued. He insisted, nevertheless, that ministers are entitled to a maintenance, and that the members of a church may be compelled, by the proper use of spiritual power, to perform their duty, in contributing to the support of a minister. In the "Bloody Tenet," (p. 168) he says: "To that Scripture, Gal. 6: 6. 'Let him that is taught in the word make him that teacheth partake of all his goods,' I answer, that teaching was of persons converted, believers entered into the school and family of Christ, the Church, which Church, being rightly gathered, is also rightly invested with the power of the Lord Jesus, to force every soul therein by spiritual weapons and penalties to do its duty."

The doctrines of Roger Williams, on this subject, as well as on the general principle of liberty of conscience, are rapidly gaining the victory over the old system. A legal provision for the clergy, by which all the citizens are compelled

to pay for the support of religious teachers, whether they choose to hear them or not, is unjust in principle, and pernicious in practice; producing discontent and odium among the people, and tending to introduce mere worldly and mercenary men into the ministry. Its effects, even in Massachusetts, have convinced men, of all parties, of its inexpediency. It is a coincidence, which the author views with pleasure, that, while this book has been passing through the press, the citizens of Massachusetts have adopted an amendment of the Constitution, which, in its results, will sweep away the last relic of the old system. The principles of Roger Williams will soon be triumphantly established in Massachusetts, and there will not be, even in theory, any dominant and favored sect, in this venerable commonwealth. In every other State in our Union, entire religious freedom is enjoyed. In England, the march is onward. In a few years, her establishment must fall, and religion be placed, where it should be, under the protection of the Saviour, drawing her revenues from the willing hands of his followers, and renewing her strength and beauty, by taking her appropriate station, like the angel in the sun, high above the contaminations of the earth.

The book before us ends, with what the author calls the "*summa totalis*:"

"1st. The civil state is bound, before God, to take off that bond and yoke of soul oppression [the national establishment] and to proclaim free and impartial liberty to all the people of the three nations, to choose and maintain what worship and ministry their souls and consciences are persuaded of.

"2dly. The civil state is humbly to be implored to provide, in their high wisdom, for the security of all these respective consciences, in their respective meetings, assemblings, worshippings, preachings, disputings, &c. and that civil peace, and the beauty of civility and humanity, be maintained among the chief opposers and dissenters.

"3dly. It is the duty of all that are in authority, and of all that are able, to countenance, and encourage and supply all such true volunteers, as give and devote themselves to the service and ministry of Christ Jesus in any kind; although it be also the duty, and will be the practice, of all such, whom the Spirit of God sends upon any work of

Christ's, rather to work, as Paul did among the Corinthians and Thessalonians, than the work and service of their Lord and Master should be neglected." pp. 29, 30.

Mr. Williams is said to have published, in London, in the same year, 1652, a work, entitled, "Experiments of Spiritual Life and Health, and their Preservatives." Of this book, no copy has come to our knowledge.

The only remaining printed book of Mr. Williams, is his narrative of the dispute with the Quakers. It is entitled, "George Fox digged out of his Burrowes, or an Offer of Disputation on fourteen Proposals, made this last Summer, 1672, (so called,) unto G. Fox, then present on Rhode-Island, in New-England, by R. W. As also how (G. Fox slily departing) the Disputation went on, being managed three Days at Newport, on Rhode-Island, and one day at Providence, between John Stubs, John Burnet, and William Edmundson, on the one Part, and R. W. on the other. In which many Quotations out of G. Fox and Ed. Burrowes' Book in Folio are alleged. With an Appendix, of some Scores of G. F. his simple and lame Answers to his Opposites, in that Book, quoted and replied to, by R. W. of Providence, in N. E. Boston. Printed by John Foster, 1676." It is a small quarto volume, of 327 pages. Its execution is creditable to the American press, at that early day.

The book is dedicated to the King, Charles II. in a courteous epistle, in which Mr. Williams calls New-England a "miserable, cold, howling wilderness," yet says, that God "hath made it His glory, your Majesty's glory, and a glory to the English and Protestant name."

There is also an epistle "To the People called Quakers," in which the author says, "From my childhood, (now above threescore years) the Father of Lights and Mercies touched my soul with a love to himself, to his only-begotten, the true Lord Jesus, to his Holy Scriptures, &c. His infinite wisdom hath given me to see the city, court and country, the schools and universities of my native country, to converse with some Turks, Jews, Papists, and all sorts of Protestants, and by books, to know the affairs and religions of all countries, &c. My conclusion is, that *Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee* (Matt. 9) is one of the joyfullest sounds that ever came to poor sinful ears."

He says, "I have used some sharp, scripture language, but not (as commonly you do) passionately and unjustly."

He adds a letter "to those many learned and pious men whom G. Fox hath so sillily and scornfully answered in his book in folio, especially to those whose names I have been bold to mention in the Narrative and Appendix, Mr. Richard Baxter, Mr. John Owen, &c." In this letter is this kind and liberal sentence: "As to matters in dispute between yourselves and me, I willingly omitted them, as knowing, that many able and honest seamen, in their observations of this sun (one picture of Christ Jesus) differ sometimes in their reckonings, though uprightly aiming at, and bound for, one port and harbor."

Then follows the main body of the work, containing an interesting account of the dispute, and a long and tedious examination of numerous points of doctrine, which Mr. Fox and his friends maintained. We cannot present an analysis of the book. It would afford neither profit nor pleasure. Much of the discussion is a dispute about dark questions, and many of Mr. Williams' objections arose, probably, from the uncouth phraseology with which Mr. Fox obscured his real meaning. Mr. Williams might easily misunderstand his opponents, while they insisted so strongly on the teachings of the inward light, on the formation of Christ in the soul, and other similar doctrines. Mr. Fox, too, assumed some positions, which none of the Friends would now approve. He justified, for example, the abominable conduct of the females who appeared naked in the streets, and contended that they acted under divine inspiration. Mr. Williams said, "You shall never persuade souls (not bewitched) that the Holy Spirit of God should persuade your women and maidens to appear in public streets and assemblies stark naked." Mr. Fox replied, "We do believe thee in that dark, persecuting, bloody spirit that thou and the New-England priests are bewitched in, you cannot believe, that you are *naked* from God, and his clothing, and blind. And therefore hath the Lord in his power moved some of his sons and daughters to go naked; yea, and they did tell them, in Oliver's days, and the Long Parliament's, that God would strip them of their Church profession, and of their power, as naked as they were. And so they were true prophets and prophet-

esses to the nation, as many sober men have confessed since, though thou and the old persecuting priests in New-England remain in your blindness and nakedness." * Mr. Williams might well abhor Mr. Fox's principles, if this had been a fair specimen of their tendency.

Mr. Williams was accused by Mr. Fox and others of advocating persecution, because he condemned the use of *Thee* and *Thou* to superiors, as uncivil, and declared, that "a due and moderate restraint and punishing of these incivilities (though pretending conscience) is as far from persecution (properly so called) as that it is a duty and command of God unto all mankind, first in families, and thence unto all mankind societies." p. 200. Mr. Williams did not reason on this point with his usual clearness. If a man is conscientious about using the terms Thee and Thou, and wearing his hat, he ought to be allowed to do so, because these customs do not necessarily interfere with any other man's rights. But Mr. Williams viewed them as offences against civil decorum, and thought that they should be restrained and punished as such. He cannot, therefore, be justly accused of inconsistency in relation to his principles of religious liberty. He probably had in his view the offensive language, which some of the persons called Quakers used toward magistrates and others.† It is, indeed, a curious circumstance, that many of the early Quakers were remarkable for a spirit of bitter railing. Mr. Baxter says: "The Quakers, in their shops, when I go along London streets, say, 'Alas! poor man, thou art yet in darkness.' They have oft come into the congregation, when I had liberty to preach Christ's Gospel, and cried out against me as a deceiver of the people. They have followed me home, crying out in the streets, 'The day of the Lord is coming, when thou shalt perish as a deceiver.' They have stood in the market-place, and under my window year after year, crying out to the people, 'Take heed of your priests, they deceive your souls!' and if they saw any one wear a lace or a rich clothing, they cried out to me, 'These are the fruit of thy ministry.'" ‡ Similar scenes were ex-

* N. E. Firebrand Quenched, p 9.

† See Humphrey Norton's letter to Governor Prince, of Plymouth, Backus, vol. i. p. 322.

‡ Works, vol. i. p. 689.

hibited in this country. There was a remarkable contrast, at that time, between the language and the general demeanor of the Quakers. They used no force, and made no resistance, but they uttered, without stint, the most virulent epithets. It might seem, that they had literally adopted the counsel of Minerva to Achilles—not to unsheathe the sword, but to reproach their adversaries with words:

"Μηδὲ ξιφος ἕλκεο χειρί,
Ἀλλ' ἤτοι ἐπεσιν μεν ονειδισον." *

Mr. Williams, in writing his book, caught some of the same spirit, and used a style of contemptuous bitterness, which was not natural to him. Mr. Fox and Mr. Burnyeat replied in the same strain, though with more coarseness. Their book is a quarto, of 489 pages. It is entitled, "A New-England Firebrand Quenched," &c. They filled twenty-four pages with words and phrases culled from Mr. Williams' book, with this preface: "A catalogue of R. W's. envious, malicious, scornful, railing stuff, false accusations and blasphemies, which he foully and unchristianlike hath scattered and dispersed through his book." At the end are two letters, the one from Mr. Coddington, and the other from Mr. Richard Scott, in both of which Mr. Williams is spoken of with much harshness.

But we have done with these books. It would be well, for the reputation of all the parties, if they could be forgotten.

We have thus reviewed all the printed books of Mr. Williams, of which we have been able to obtain copies. Two or three treatises, which he wrote, were not, it is presumed, printed. Among these, was the essay concerning the patent, which excited the displeasure of the magistrates in Massachusetts, before his banishment.† At the end of his Key, he says, "I have further treated of these natives of New-England, and that great point of their conversion, in a little additional discourse to this." This discourse we have never seen. In the letter to Governor Bradstreet, (page 353 of this volume) Mr. Williams speaks of a col-

* Iliad, A. l. 210, 211. † See pages 57 and 58 of this volume.

lection of heads of discourses preached to the "scattered English at Narraganset," and which Mr. Williams requests the Governor to assist him in printing. It does not appear that it was printed. Dr. Holmes, (Annals, vol. i. p. 411) says, "In the Prince Collection of MSS. are heads of discourses, which he delivered to the Narraganset Indians." An ineffectual search has been made among the MSS. referred to, for these heads of discourses, which may have been mislaid. They may be the same as those mentioned in the letter to Governor Bradstreet.

There is said to be a MS. of one hundred and six quarto pages, in the library of the Massachusetts Historical Society, entitled, "Esau and Jacob's Mystical Harmony," &c. written in 1666, with a memorandum in Dr. Stiles' handwriting, "I suppose Roger Williams." We have not had an opportunity to examine this manuscript.

The letters of Mr. Williams were very numerous. He held an extensive correspondence. Many of these letters are preserved, and many others are referred to, which have perished.

Of the character of Mr. Williams, as a writer, those who have read the letters and extracts from his books, contained in this volume, can form a judgment. His style is very original and characteristic. It is the outpouring of a full and ardent mind, too intent on the thought, to be very careful of the expression. It is, consequently, not always correct; but it is always clear and forcible. He exhibits ample learning, and quotations from the classics are scattered through his writings, in an easy and natural manner. He was very familiar with the Scriptures, which he read in the original languages; though he, like most theological writers of that time, was imperfectly acquainted with the laws of interpretation. He had a very active imagination, and his style is full of figures, always striking, and often happy, but not uniformly selected and applied, with a pure taste. This liveliness of his fancy made him fond of puns and quaint expressions, which he used, however, with no design to amuse the reader, but to illustrate and enforce his meaning. He had, indeed, a poetical mind, and some passages of his works remind us of the magnificent periods of Milton and Taylor. The specimens of his verses in his Key, though superior to much of the contemporary rhyme

contained in Morton's Memorial and Mather's Magnalia, are inferior, in real poetic feeling and expression, to some paragraphs of his prose works. He was one of those poets mentioned by Wordsworth,

> "That are sown
> By nature; men endowed with highest gifts,
> The vision and the faculty divine,
> Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse."

His writings, in short, like those of all great minds, are a reflection of his own character, and are marked with his excellencies and his faults.

We must now close this book with a few observations concerning his character. It is unnecessary to dwell minutely on this point, for no man was ever more transparent; and those who have traced his history, have had ample means of forming their own judgment.

His mental faculties were of a high order. His mind was strong, original and independent. The clearness with which he discerned the true principles of religious liberty, and the steadiness with which he maintained them, in opposition to the general theory and practice of that age, show a superior intellect. Few men are far in advance of their contemporaries; and this is a wise arrangement of Providence, for such men are not so immediately useful, as many others of inferior powers. They are not understood—they offend the prejudices, and wound the self-love of men. Their influence is of the nature of prophecy. They plant principles, which are of slow growth, but which will eventually produce rich fruit. Such individuals must be content to live for posterity. They must be steadfast in upholding the truth, though amid ingratitude and opposition, cheered by the bright prospect of future triumph.

Mr. Williams was of this class of men, and his station in that class is a proof of the elevation and vigor of his mind.

It is an evidence, also, of superior moral qualities. It requires a spirit of self-sacrifice, a pure love of truth, a benevolent zeal for the welfare of mankind, an elevation above selfish ends. All these traits of character Mr. Williams possessed. He was sincerely pious. Love to God dwelt habitually in his soul, and controlled his feelings and

his actions. In his books and letters, every topic takes a hue from his piety. His magnanimous forgiveness of injuries, his zeal for the welfare of all who sought his aid, his untiring benevolence towards the hapless savages, his patriotic and self-denying toils for the prosperity of his colony, all show the efficacy and fervor of those religious principles which governed him. Mr. Callender said of him, "Mr. Williams appears, by the whole course and tenor of his life and conduct here, to have been one of the most disinterested men that ever lived, a most pious and heavenly minded soul."* Dr. Bentley says: "In Salem, every person loved Mr. Williams. He had no personal enemies, under any pretence. All valued his friendship. Kind treatment could win him, but opposition could not conquer him. He was not afraid to stand alone for truth against the world, and he had address enough with his firmness, never to be forsaken by the friends he had ever gained. He had always a tenderness of conscience, and feared every offence against moral truth. He breathed the purest devotion. He was a friend of human nature, forgiving, upright and pious. He understood the Indians better than any man of his age. He made not so many converts, but he made more sincere friends."†

His religious principles were those of Calvin. His views of the ordinances of the Gospel were, undoubtedly, after his baptism, those now held by the Baptists. But he did not acknowledge himself as belonging to any denomination; because he believed, that there are now neither true churches, nor persons authorized to administer the ordinances.

His political principles were decidedly in favor of the rights of the people. He not only displayed them, in the civil constitution of his colony, but he repeatedly stated them in his books. Such passages as the following contain his political creed:

"Kings and magistrates must be considered invested with no more power than the people betrust them with." "The sovereign power of all civil authority is founded in the consent of the people."‡

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* Century Discourse, p. 17. † 1 His. Col. vi. p. 249.
‡ Bloody Tenet, pp. 116, 243.

The faults of Mr. Williams sprung, in part, from the imperfection of human nature, and in part from his temperament and the constitution of his mind. He was ardent, and his imagination was the most active of his intellectual faculties. He sometimes adopted opinions, rather by a sudden bound of the imagination, than by a regular process of reasoning. His ardor, and his conscientious and fearless love of truth, impelled him to act on his opinions, with a degree of energy and firmness which exposed him to the charge of obstinacy. Such a man will occasionally fall into error, and into rapid transitions, which will give to his conduct the appearance of inconsistency. This was the case with Mr. Williams, in some of his actions, but the inconsistency never affected his great principles. These he never abandoned for a moment. His course was steadily onward, like that of a planet, though disturbing causes occasionally produced slight eccentricities.

In his domestic relations, he seems to have been amiable and happy. His expressions of attachment to his family prove the strength of his conjugal and parental affection. His children grew up to maturity. A numerous posterity have arisen to bless his memory, and to feel pleasure in the contemplation of his character and the diffusion of his fame.

He is dead, but his principles survive, and are destined to spread over the earth. The State which he founded is his monument.* Her sons, when asked for a record of Roger Williams, may point to her history, unstained by a single act of persecution; to her prosperity, her perfect freedom, her tranquil happiness, and may reply, in the spirit of the epitaph on the tomb of Sir Christopher Wren, in St. Paul's Cathedral, "*look around!*"

"Si monumentum quæris, circumspice."

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*See Appendix I.

APPENDIX.

Note A. p. 23.

On the subject of the relationship between Cromwell and Roger Williams, an obliging antiquarian friend says:

"As to the relationship between Mr. Williams and Oliver Cromwell, I can only say, that it was quite remote, if it existed at all. In the London Review, for March, 1772, is a genealogy of the Cromwell family. As you may not have seen this account, and as it may interest you, I will give you an abridgment of it, that you may see how near related he was to the Protector.

"The genealogy was extracted from Welch chronicles, about the year 1602, to show the descent of Sir Henry Cromwell, who was then living. It commences in the person of Glothyan, fifth Lord of Powes, who married Morpeth, daughter and heiress of Edwin ap Tydwall, Lord of Cardigan, who was lineally descended from Cavedig, of whom the county of Cardigan took the name of Cavedigion. His son, Gwaith Voyd, was Lord of Cardigan, Powes, Gwayte and Gwaynesaye. He died about 1066.

"From Gwynstan ap Gwaith, second son of the above Gwaith Voyd, was lineally descended, through about thirteen generations, or in about four hundred and forty years, Morgan Williams, who, in the reign of Henry VIII., married the sister of Thomas Cromwell. This Morgan Williams had a son Richard, who was knighted by Henry VIII., not by the name of Williams, but by the name of Cromwell, after his uncle, whose heir he became. This Sir Richard had a son Henry, who was knighted by Queen Elizabeth in 1563, and married Joan, daughter of Sir Ralph Warren, and had six sons and four daughters. The sons were Oliver, Robert, Henry, Richard, Philip and Ralph. Oliver, the Protector, was the only son of Robert, and born in the parish of St. John, in Huntingdon, April 25, 1599.

"The above will satisfy us, that the tradition in the family of their being a connection by blood with the Protector, may be true. You will see, however, that the connection was quite remote."

Concerning the parents of Mr. Williams, I have discovered nothing. The name "Roger Williams" occurs in Welsh genealogies,

but without any clue to guide us. I have written to Wales for information, but have received no reply. A brother of Mr. Williams, named Robert, was one of the early inhabitants of Providence, and was afterwards a schoolmaster in Newport. He mentions, in one of his books, another brother, "a Turkey merchant." Richard Williams, who settled in Taunton, has been supposed to have been a brother of Roger.

NOTE B. p. 54.

Our note respecting the Anabaptists must be brief. An Anabaptist is one who baptizes again a person previously baptized. The Cathari, of the third century, were accustomed to baptize again those who joined them from other sects.—Murdock's Mosheim, vol. i. p. 247. The name was early applied to those who opposed infant baptism, and who baptized those who joined them, though they had been baptized in infancy. The name, of course, expressed the views of their opponents, and not their own, because they did not consider such persons as having been baptized.

Of the history of the Anabaptists, (retaining this name for the sake of convenience,) we cannot now speak. The odium and alarm which are alluded to in the text, arose from the disturbances that occurred in Germany, about the year 1535. It would be tedious to narrate these events; but it may be stated, briefly, that the peasants, oppressed by their feudal lords, made a desperate effort to obtain their freedom. Among them were some Anabaptists, mingled with Lutherans, Catholics and others. They obtained possession of the city of Munster, in Westphalia, and held it about three years; but they were finally overpowered, and the war terminated, after immense slaughter. It seems to have been a just revolt, and a struggle for liberty; but it failed, and the leaders have been stigmatized as fanatics, and as guilty of every species of crime. The story has been told by their oppressors and enemies, and it is entitled to very little credit. Mosheim seems to have been unable to find words to express his abhorrence of the Anabaptists, to whom he imputes most of the disorders of the Rustic War. Other writers are more candid. Benedict (vol. i. pp. 246, 265) has vindicated the Baptists from the charges which have been alleged against them in connection with that war. Admitting that very dangerous doctrines were then avowed, and wrong actions committed, it is unjust to make the Baptists of England and America responsible for them. It would be as fair, to impute to Pedobaptists all the atrocities of the Papal church. It is sufficient for our present purpose, to prove, that the English and American Baptists have never held the principles which have been ascribed to the Anabaptists of Germany. The rejection of magistracy has been the most prominent charge. A company of persons, called Anabaptists, in London, published a Confession of Faith, about the year 1611, in which they say: "The office of the magistrate is a permissive ordinance of God." And in the following article, they anticipated the doctrines of Roger Williams: "The magistrate is not to meddle with religion, or matters of conscience, nor to compel men to this or that form of religion;

because Christ is the King or Lawgiver of the church and conscience."—Crosby, vol. i. p. 71, appendix. In a "Confession of Faith of seven congregations, or churches of Christ, in London, which are commonly, but unjustly, called Anabaptists," published in 1646, they say: "A civil magistracy is an ordinance of God, set up by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well; and that in all lawful things, commanded by them, subjection ought to be given by us in the Lord, not only for wrath, but for conscience sake; and that we are to make supplications and prayers for kings, and for all that are in authority, that under them we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty."—Crosby, vol. i. appendix, p. 23. These extracts express the doctrines of the English Baptist churches on the point in question. The principles of Roger Williams, respecting religious and civil duties, are sufficiently exhibited in the Memoir. They are the principles of the American Baptist churches, and have been so from the beginning. In the Confession of Faith of the First Baptist Church in Boston, founded in 1665, and the oldest church in what was then the colony of Massachusetts, the church say: "We acknowledge magistracy to be an ordinance of God, and to submit ourselves to them in the Lord, not because of wrath only, but for conscience sake."—Winchell's Historical Discourses, p. 10.

Note C. p. 74.

The following very interesting letter was first published in the first volume of the Massachusetts Historical Collections:

"*Providence, June* 22, 1670, (*ut vulgo.*)

"Major Mason,*

"My honored, dear and ancient friend, my due respects and earnest desires to God, for your eternal peace, &c.

"I crave your leave and patience to present you with some few considerations, occasioned by the late transactions between your

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* "Major Mason—famous for his services, while captain, in the Pequod war. He was a soldier in the Low Countries, under Sir Thomas Fairfax, one of the first settlers of Dorchester, Mass. in 1630. He afterwards removed to Windsor, Conn. He put an end to the Pequod war, in 1638; was appointed, soon after, Major General of the Connecticut forces, and in May, 1660, was elected Deputy Governor of that colony. He died at Norwich, in the seventy-third year of his age, in 1672 or 1673. An account of the Pequod war was published by him, republished in Hubbard's Narrative, and by Rev. T. Prince. In the fourth volume of the Massachusetts Historical Collections, a curious poem is published, of Governor Wolcott's, giving an account of his predecessor Winthrop's embassy to the Court of Charles II., to obtain a charter, in which Mason is mentioned with the highest eulogies. Winthrop is made to give the King a relation, among other things, of the Pequod war, and says:

'The army now drawn up: to he their head
Our valiant Mason was commissioned;
(Whose name is never mentioned by me,
Without a special note of dignity.')

"In granting the charter, Charles speaks thus:

'Chief in the patent, Winthrop, thou shalt stand,
And valiant Mason place at thy next hand.'" G.

colony and ours. The last year you were pleased, in one of your lines to me, to tell me that you longed to see my face once more before you died. I embraced your love, though I feared my old lame bones, and yours, had arrested travelling in this world, and therefore I was and am ready to lay hold on all occasions of writing, as I do at present.

"The occasion, I confess, is sorrowful, because I see yourselves, with others, embarked in a resolution to invade and despoil your poor countrymen, in a wilderness, and your ancient friends, of our temporal and soul liberties.

"It is sorrowful, also, because mine eye beholds a black and doleful train of grievous, and, I fear, bloody consequences, at the heel of this business, both to you and us. The Lord is righteous in all our afflictions, that is a maxim; the Lord is gracious to all oppressed, that is another; he is most gracious to the soul that cries and waits on him: that is silver, tried in the fire seven times.

"Sir, I am not out of hopes, but that while your aged eyes and mine are yet in their orbs, and not yet sunk down into their holes of rottenness, we shall leave our friends and countrymen, our children and relations, and this land, in peace, behind us. To this end, Sir, please you with a calm and steady and a Christian hand, to hold the balance and to weigh these few considerations, in much love and due respect presented:

"First. When I was unkindly and unchristianly, as I believe, driven from my house and land and wife and children, (in the midst of a New-England winter, now about thirty-five years past,) at Salem, that ever-honored Governor, Mr. Winthrop, privately wrote to me to steer my course to the Narraganset Bay and Indians, for many high and heavenly and public ends, encouraging me, from the freeness of the place from any English claims or patents. I took his prudent motion as a hint and voice from God, and waving all other thoughts and motions, I steered my course from Salem (though in winter snow, which I feel yet) unto these parts, wherein I may say Peniel, that is, I have seen the face of God.

"Second. I first pitched, and begun to build and plant at Seekonk, now Rehoboth, but I received a letter from my ancient friend, Mr. Winslow, then Governor of Plymouth, professing his own and others' love and respect to me, yet lovingly advising me, since I was fallen into the edge of their bounds, and they were loth to displease the Bay, to remove but to the other side of the water, and then, he said, I had the country free before me, and might be as free as themselves, and we should be loving neighbors together. These were the joint understandings of these two eminently wise and Christian Governors and others, in their day, together with their counsel and advice as to the freedom and vacancy of this place, which in this respect, and many other Providences of the Most Holy and Only Wise, I called *Providence*.

"Third. Sometime after, the Plymouth great sachem, (Ousamaquin*) upon occasion, affirming that Providence was his land, and therefore Plymouth's land, and some resenting it, the then prudent and godly Governor, Mr. Bradford, and others of his godly council,

* Commonly called Massassoit.

answered, that if, after due examination, it should be found true what the barbarian said, yet having, to my loss of a harvest that year, been now (though by their gentle advice) as good as banished from Plymouth as from the Massachusetts, and I had quietly and patiently departed from them, at their motion, to the place where now I was, I should not be molested and tossed up and down again, while they had breath in their bodies; and surely, between those, my friends of the Bay and Plymouth, I was sorely tossed, for one fourteen weeks, in a bitter winter season, not knowing what bread or bed did mean, beside the yearly loss of no small matter in my trading with English and natives, being debarred from Boston, the chief mart and port of New-England. God knows that many thousand pounds cannot repay the very temporary losses I have sustained. It lies upon the Massachusetts and me, yea, and other colonies joining with them, to examine, with fear and trembling, before the eyes of flaming fire, the true cause of all my sorrows and sufferings. It pleased the Father of spirits to touch many hearts, dear to him, with some relentings; amongst which, that great and pious soul, Mr. Winslow, melted, and kindly visited me, at Providence, and put a piece of gold into the hands of my wife, for our supply.

"Fourth. When, the next year after my banishment, the Lord drew the bow of the Pequod war against the country, in which, Sir, the Lord made yourself, with others, a blessed instrument of peace to all New-England, I had my share of service to the whole land in that Pequod business, inferior to very few that acted, for,

"1. Upon letters received from the Governor and Council at Boston, requesting me to use my utmost and speediest endeavors to break and hinder the league labored for by the Pequods against the Mohegans, and Pequods against the English, (excusing the not sending of company and supplies, by the haste of the business,) the Lord helped me immediately to put my life into my hand, and, scarce acquainting my wife, to ship myself, all alone, in a poor canoe, and to cut through a stormy wind, with great seas, every minute in hazard of life, to the sachem's house.

"2. Three days and nights my business forced me to lodge and mix with the bloody Pequod ambassadors, whose hands and arms, methought, wreaked with the blood of my countrymen, murdered and massacred by them on Connecticut river, and from whom I could not but nightly look for their bloody knives at my own throat also.

"3. When God wondrously preserved me, and helped me to break to pieces the Pequods' negotiation and design, and to make, and promote and finish, by many travels and charges, the English league with the Narragansets and Mohegans against the Pequods, and that the English forces marched up to the Narraganset country against the Pequods, I gladly entertained, at my house in Providence, the General Stoughton and his officers, and used my utmost care that all his officers and soldiers should be well accommodated with us.

"4. I marched up with them to the Narraganset sachems, and brought my countrymen and the barbarians, sachems and captains, to a mutual confidence and complacence, each in other.

"5. Though I was ready to have marched further, yet, upon

agreement that I should keep at Providence, as an agent between the Bay and the army, I returned, and was interpreter and intelligencer, constantly receiving and sending letters to the Governor and Council at Boston, &c., in which work I judge it no impertinent digression to recite (out of the many scores of letters, at times, from Mr. Winthrop,) this one pious and heavenly prophecy, touching all New-England, of that gallant man, viz: "If the Lord turn away his face from our sins, and bless our endeavors and yours, at this time, against our bloody enemy, we and our children shall long enjoy peace, in this, our wilderness condition." And himself and some other of the Council motioned, and it was debated, whether or no I had not merited, not only to be recalled from banishment, but also to be honored with some remark of favor. It is known who hindered, who never promoted the liberty of other men's consciences. These things, and ten times more, I could relate, to show that I am not a stranger to the Pequod wars and lands, and possibly not far from the merit of a foot of land in either country, which I have not.

"5. Considering (upon frequent exceptions against Providence men) that we had no authority for civil government, I went purposely to England, and upon my report and petition, the Parliament granted us a charter of government for these parts, so judged vacant on all hands. And upon this, the country about us was more friendly, and wrote to us, and treated us as an authorized colony; only the difference of our consciences much obstructed. The bounds of this, our first charter, I (having occular knowledge of persons, places and transactions) did honestly and conscientiously, as in the holy presence of God, draw up from Pawcatuck river, which I then believed, and still do, is free from all English claims and conquests; for although there were some Pequods on this side the river, who, by reason of some sachems' marriages with some on this side, lived in a kind of neutrality with both sides, yet, upon the breaking out of the war, they relinquished their land to the possession of their enemies, the Narragansets and Nianticks, and their land never came into the condition of the lands on the other side, which the English, by conquest, challenged; so that I must still affirm, as in God's holy presence, I tenderly waved to touch a foot of land in which I knew the Pequod wars were maintained and were properly Pequod, being a gallant country; and from Pawcatuck river hitherward, being but a patch of ground, full of troublesome inhabitants, I did, as I judged, inoffensively, draw our poor and inconsiderable line.

"It is true, when at Portsmouth, on Rhode-Island, some of ours, in a General Assembly, motioned their planting on this side Pawcatuck. I, hearing that some of the Massachusetts reckoned this land theirs, by conquest, dissuaded from the motion, until the matter should be amicably debated and composed; for though I questioned not our right, &c., yet I feared it would be inexpedient and offensive, and procreative of these heats and fires, to the dishonoring of the King's Majesty, and the dishonoring and blaspheming of God and of religion in the eyes of the English and barbarians about us.

"6. Some time after the Pequod war and our charter from the

Parliament, the government of Massachusetts wrote to myself (then chief officer in this colony) of their receiving of a patent from the Parliament for these vacant lands, as an addition to the Massachusetts, &c., and thereupon requesting me to exercise no more authority, &c., for, they wrote, their charter was granted some few weeks before ours. I returned, what I believed righteous and weighty, to the hands of my true friend, Mr. Winthrop, the first mover of my coming into these parts, and to that answer of mine I never received the least reply; only it is certain, that, at Mr. Gorton's complaint against the Massachusetts, the Lord High Admiral, President, said, openly, in a full meeting of the commissioners, that he knew no other charter for these parts than what Mr. Williams had obtained, and he was sure that charter, which the Massachusetts Englishmen pretended, had never passed the table.

"7. Upon our humble address, by our agent, Mr. Clarke, to his Majesty, and his gracious promise of renewing our former charter, Mr. Winthrop, upon some mistake, had entrenched upon our line, and not only so, but, as it is said, upon the lines of other charters also. Upon Mr. Clarke's complaint, your grant was called in again, and it had never been returned, but upon a report that the agents, Mr. Winthrop and Mr. Clarke, were agreed, by mediation of friends, (and it is true, they came to a solemn agreement, under hands and seals,) which agreement was never violated on our part.

"8. But the King's Majesty sending his commissioners (among other of his royal purposes) to reconcile the differences of, and to settle the bounds between the colonies, yourselves know how the King himself therefore hath given a decision to this controversy. Accordingly, the King's Majesty's aforesaid commissioners at Rhode Island, (where, as a commissioner for this colony, I transacted with them, as did also commissioners from Plymouth.) they composed a controversy between Plymouth and us, and settled the bounds between us, in which we rest.

"9. However you satisfy yourselves with the Pequod conquest; with the sealing of your charter some few weeks before ours; with the complaints of particular men to your colony; yet, upon a due and serious examination of the matter, in the sight of God, you will find the business at bottom to be,

"First, a depraved appetite after the great vanities, dreams and shadows of this vanishing life, great portions of land, land in this wilderness, as if men were in as great necessity and danger for want of great portions of land, as poor, hungry, thirsty seamen have, after a sick and stormy, a long and starving passage. This is one of the gods of New-England, which the living and most high Eternal will destroy and famish.

"2. An unneighborly and unchristian intrusion upon us, as being the weaker, contrary to your laws, as well as ours, concerning purchasing of lands without the consent of the General Court. This I told Major Atherton, at his first going up to the Narraganset about this business. I refused all their proffers of land, and refused to interpret for them to the sachems.

"3. From these violations and intrusions arise the complaint of many privateers, not dealing as they would be dealt with, according

to law of nature, the law of the prophets and Christ Jesus, complaining against others, in a design, when they themselves are delinquents and wrong doers. I could aggravate this many ways with Scripture rhetoric and similitudes, but I see need of anodynes, (as physicians speak,) and not of irritations. Only this I must crave leave to say, that it looks like a prodigy or monster, that countrymen among savages in a wilderness; that professors of God and one Mediator, of an eternal life, and that this is like a dream, should not be content with those vast and large tracts which all the other colonies have, (like platters and tables full of dainties,) but pull and snatch away their poor neighbors' bit or crust; and a crust it is, and a dry, hard one, too, because of the natives' continual troubles, trials and vexations.

"10. Alas! Sir, in calm midnight thoughts, what are these leaves and flowers, and smoke and shadows, and dreams of earthly nothings, about which we poor fools and children, as David saith, disquiet ourselves in vain? Alas! what is all the scuffling of this world for, but, *come, will you smoke it?* What are all the contentions and wars of this world about, generally, but for greater dishes and bowls of porridge, of which, if we believe God's Spirit in Scripture, Esau and Jacob were types? Esau will part with the heavenly birthright for his supping, after his hunting, for god belly; and Jacob will part with his porridge for an eternal inheritance. O Lord, give me to make Jacob's and Mary's choice, which shall never be taken from me.

"11. How much sweeter is the counsel of the Son of God, to mind first the matters of his kingdom; to take no care for to-morrow; to pluck out, cut off and fling away right eyes, hands and feet, rather than to be cast whole into hell-fire; to consider the ravens and the lilies whom a heavenly Father so clothes and feeds; and the counsel of his servant Paul, to roll our cares, for this life also, upon the most high Lord, steward of his people, the eternal God; to be content with food and raiment; to mind not our own, but every man the things of another; yea, and to suffer wrong, and part with what we judge is right, yea, our lives and (as poor women martyrs have said) as many as there be hairs upon our heads, for the name of God and the son of God his sake. This is humanity, yea this is Christianity. The rest is but formality and picture, courteous idolatry and Jewish and Popish blasphemy against the Christian religion, the Father of spirits and his Son, the Lord Jesus. Besides, Sir, the matter with us is not about these children's toys of land, meadows, cattle, government, &c. But here, all over this colony, a great number of weak and distressed souls, scattered, are flying hither from Old and New-England, the Most High and Only Wise hath, in his infinite wisdom, provided this country and this corner as a shelter for the poor and persecuted, according to their several persuasions. And thus that heavenly man, Mr. Haynes, Governor of Connecticut, though he pronounced the sentence of my long banishment against me, at Cambridge, then Newtown, yet said unto me, in his own house at Hartford, being then in some difference with the Bay: "I think, Mr. Williams, I must now confess to you, that the most wise God hath provided and cut out this part of his world for a refuge and receptacle for all sorts of consciences. I am now under a cloud, and

my brother Hooker, with the Bay, as you have been, we have removed from them thus far, and yet they are not satisfied."

"Thus, Sir, the King's Majesty, though his father's and his own conscience favored Lord Bishops, which their father and grandfather King James, whom I have spoke with, sore against his will, also did, yet all the world may see, by his Majesty's declarations and engagements before his return, and his declarations and Parliament speeches since, and many suitable actings, how the Father of spirits hath mightily impressed and touched his royal spirit, though the Bishops much disturbed him, with deep inclination of favor and gentleness to different consciences and apprehensions as to the invisible King and way of his worship. Hence he hath vouchsafed his royal promise under his hand and broad seal, that no person in this colony shall be molested or questioned for the matters of his conscience to God, so he be loyal and keep the civil peace. Sir, we must part with lands and lives before we part with such a jewel. I judge you may yield some land and the government of it to us, and we, for peace sake, the like to you, as being but subjects to one king, &c. and I think the King's Majesty would thank us, for many reasons. But to part with this jewel, we may as soon do it as the Jews with the favor of Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes. Yourselves pretend liberty of conscience, but alas! it is but self, the great god self, only to yourselves. The King's Majesty winks at Barbadoes, where Jews and all sorts of Christian and Antichristian persuasions are free, but our grant, some few weeks after yours sealed, though granted as soon, if not before yours, is crowned with the King's extraordinary favor to this colony, as being a banished one, in which his Majesty declared himself that he would experiment, whether civil government could consist with such liberty of conscience. This his Majesty's grant was startled at by his Majesty's high officers of state, who were to view it in course before the sealing, but fearing the lion's roaring, they couched, against their wills, in obedience to his Majesty's pleasure.

"Some of yours, as I heard lately, told tales to the Archbishop of Canterbury, viz. that we are a profane people, and do not keep the Sabbath, but some do plough, &c. But, first, you told him not how we suffer freely all other persuasions, yea the common prayer, which yourselves will not suffer. If you say you will, you confess you must suffer more, as we do.

"2. You know this is but a color to your design, for, first, you know that all England itself (after the formality and superstition of morning and evening prayer) play away their Sabbath. 2d. You know yourselves do not keep the Sabbath, that is the seventh day, &c.

"3. You know that famous Calvin and thousands more held it but ceremonial and figurative, from Colossians 2, &c. and vanished; and that the day of worship was alterable at the churches' pleasure. Thus also all the Romanists confess, saying, viz. that there is no express scripture, first, for infants' baptisms; nor, second, for abolishing the seventh day, and instituting of the eighth day worship, but that it is at the churches' pleasure.

"4. You know, that generally, all this whole colony observe the

first day, only here and there one out of conscience, another out of covetousness, make no conscience of it.

"5. You know the greatest part of the world make no conscience of a seventh day. The next part of the world, Turks, Jews and Christians, keep three different days, Friday, Saturday, Sunday for their Sabbath and day of worship, and every one maintains his own by the longest sword.

"6. I have offered, and do, by these presents, to discuss by disputation, writing or printing, among other points of differences, these three positions; first, that forced worship stinks in God's nostrils. 2d. That it denies Christ Jesus yet to be come, and makes the church yet national, figurative and ceremonial. 3d. That in these flames about religion, as his Majesty, his father and grandfather have yielded, there is no other prudent, Christian way of preserving peace in the world, but by permission of differing consciences. Accordingly, I do now offer to dispute these points and other points of difference, if you please, at Hartford, Boston and Plymouth. For the manner of the dispute and the discussion, if you think fit, one whole day each month in summer, at each place, by course, I am ready, if the Lord permit, and, as I humbly hope, assist me.

"It is said, that you intend not to invade our spiritual or civil liberties, but only (under the advantage of first sealing your charter) to right the privateers that petition to you. It is said, also, that if you had but Mishquomacuck and Narraganset lands quietly yielded, you would stop at Coweset, &c. Oh, Sir, what do these thoughts preach, but that private cabins rule all, whatever become of the ship of common safety and religion, which is so much pretended in New-England? Sir, I have heard further, and by some that say they know, that something deeper than all which hath been mentioned lies in the three colonies' breasts and consultations. I judge it not fit to commit such matter to the trust of paper, &c. but only beseech the Father of spirits to guide our poor bewildered spirits, for his name and mercy sake.

"15. Whereas our case seems to be the case of Paul appealing to Cæsar against the plots of his religious, zealous adversaries, I hear you pass not of our petitions and appeals to his Majesty, for partly you think the King will not own a profane people that do not keep the Sabbath; partly you think that the King incompetent judge, but you will force him to law also, to confirm your first-born Esau, though Jacob had him by the heels, and in God's holy time must carry the birthright and inheritance. I judge your surmise is a dangerous mistake, for patents, grants and charters, and such like royal favors, are not laws of England, and acts of Parliament, nor matters of propriety and *meum* and *tuum* between the King and his subjects, which, as the times have been, have been sometimes triable in inferior Courts; but such kind of grants have been like high offices in England, of high honor, and ten, yea twenty thousand pounds gain per annum, yet revocable or curtable upon pleasure, according to the King's better information, or upon his Majesty's sight, or misbehavior, ingratefulness, or designs fraudulently plotted, private and distinct from him.

"16. Sir, I lament that such designs should be carried on at such

a time, while we are stript and whipt, and are still under (the whole country) the dreadful rods of God, in our wheat, hay, corn, cattle, shipping, trading, bodies and lives; when, on the other side of the water, all sorts of consciences (yours and ours) are frying in the Bishops' pan and furnace; when the French and Romish Jesuits, the firebrands of the world for their god belly sake, are kindling at our back, in this country, especially with the Mohawks and Mohegans, against us, of which I know and have daily information.

"17. If any please to say, is there no medicine for this malady? Must the nakedness of New-England, like some notorious strumpet, be prostituted to the blaspheming eyes of all nations? Must we be put to plead before his Majesty, and consequently the Lord Bishops, our common enemies, &c. I answer, the Father of mercies and God of all consolations hath graciously discovered to me, as I believe, a remedy, which, if taken, will quiet all minds, yours and ours, will keep yours and ours in quiet possession and enjoyment of their lands, which you all have so dearly bought and purchased in this barbarous country, and so long possessed amongst these wild savages; will preserve you both in the liberties and honors of your charters and governments, without the least impeachment of yielding one to another; with a strong curb also to those wild barbarians and all the barbarians of this country, without troubling of compromisers and arbitrators between you; without any delay, or long and chargeable and grievous address to our King's Majesty, whose gentle and serene soul must needs be afflicted to be troubled again with us. If you please to ask me what my prescription is, I will not put you off to Christian moderation or Christian humility, or Christian prudence, or Christian love, or Christian self-denial, or Christian contention or patience. For I design a civil, a humane and political medicine, which, if the God of Heaven please to bless, you will find it effectual to all the ends I have proposed. Only I must crave your pardon, both parties of you, if I judge it not fit to discover it at present. I know you are both of you hot; I fear myself, also. If both desire, in a loving and calm spirit, to enjoy your rights, I promise you, with God's help, to help you to them, in a fair and sweet and easy way. My receipt will not please you all. If it should so please God to frown upon us that you should not like it, I can but humbly mourn, and say with the prophet, that which must perish must perish. And as to myself, in endeavoring after your temporal and spiritual peace, I humbly desire to say, if I perish, I perish. It is but a shadow vanished, a bubble broke, a dream finished. Eternity will pay for all.

"Sir, I am your old and true friend and servant,

"R. W.

"To my honored and ancient friend, Mr. Thomas Prince, Governor of Plymouth Colony, these present. And by his honored hand this copy, sent to Connecticut, whom it most concerneth, I humbly present to the General Court of Plymouth, when next assembled."

The following documents are inserted here, as belonging to the history of Roger Williams, though a suitable opportunity did not occur to insert them in the text.

The subjoined letter was copied for Mr. Backus, by the late Judge Howell, of Providence, and was accompanied by the following note, in his hand writing: "This remonstrance was sent in to the town, upon their concluding to divide among themselves certain common lands, out of which R. Williams wanted some to remain still common, for the town afterwards to give occasionally to such as fled to them, or were banished for conscience sake, as he at first gave it all to them."

"Loving friends and neighbors,

"I have again considered on these papers, and find many considerable things in both of them. My desire is, that after a friendly debate of particulars, every man may sit down and rest in quiet with the final sentence and determination of the town, for all experience tells us that public peace and love is better than abundance of corn and cattle, &c. I have one only motion and petition, which I earnestly pray the town to lay to heart, as ever they look for a blessing from God on the town, on your families, your corn and cattle, and your children after you; it is this, that after you have got over the black brook of some soul bondage yourselves, you tear not down the bridge after you, by leaving no small pittance for distressed souls that may come after you. What though your division or allotment be never so small, yet ourselves know that some men's distresses are such, that a piece of a dry crust and a dish of cold water, is sweet, which if this town will give sincerely unto God, (setting aside some little portions for other distressed souls to get bread on) you know who hath engaged His heavenly word for your reward and recompense.

"Yours, ROGER WILLIAMS.

To the town of Providence."

The following letter is an honorable evidence of his benevolent spirit:

"*Nar.* 22, 11, 50, (*so called.*)

"Well beloved friends,

"Loving respects to each of you presented, with hearty desires of your present and eternal peace. I am sorry that I am occasioned to trouble you in the midst of many your other troubles, yet upon the experience of your wonted loving-kindness and gentleness toward all men and myself also, I pray you hear me patiently. I had proposed to have personally attended this Court, and to have presented, myself, these few requests following, but being much lamed and broken with such travels, I am forced to present you in writing these five requests. The first four concern others living and dead amongst us; the fifth, concerns myself.

"First, then, I pray be pleased to review the propositions between us and our dead friend, John Smith; and since it hath pleased the God of all mercies, to vouchsafe this town and others such a mercy, by his means, I beseech you study how to put an end to that controversy depending between us and him, (as I may so speak) and his; 'tis true, you have referred that business to some of our loving neighbors amongst you; but since there are some obstructions, I beseech you put forth your wisdoms, who know more ways to the wood than one. Ease the first, and appoint others, or some other course, that the dead clamor not from his grave against us, but that

the country about us may say, that Providence is not only a wise, but a grateful people to the God of mercies, and all his instruments of mercy towards us.

"My second request concerns the dead still. I understand, that one of the orphans of our dead friend, Daniel Abbott, is likely (as she herself told me) to be disposed of in marriage. 'Tis true she is now come to some years, but who knows not what need the poor maid hath of your fatherly care, counsel and direction. I would not disparage the young man (for I hear he hath been laborious) yet with your leave, I might say, I doubt not you will not give your daughters in marriage to such, whose lives have been in such a course, without some good assurance and certificate of his not being engaged to other women, or otherways criminous, as also of his resolution to forsake his former course, lest (this inquiry being neglected) the maid and ourselves repent when misery hath befallen her, and a just reproof and charges befall ourselves, of which we have no need.

"For, thirdly, I crave your consideration of that lamentable object (what shall I say, of all our censure or pity, I am sure) of all our wonder and astonishment, Mrs. Weston. My experience of the distempers of persons elsewhere, makes me confident, that although not in all things, yet in a great measure, she is a distracted woman. My request is, that you would be pleased to take what is left of hers into your own hands, and appoint some to order it for her supply, and if it may be, let some public act of mercy to her necessities, stand upon record amongst the merciful acts of a merciful town, that hath received many mercies from heaven, and remember that we know not how soon our wives may be widows, and our children orphans, yea, and ourselves be deprived of all or most of our reason, before we go from hence, except mercy from the God of mercies prevent it.

"Fourthly. Let me crave your patience, while once more I lead your consideration to the grave, amongst the dead, the widows and the fatherless. From some neighbors and the widow Mann herself, I understand, that notwithstanding her motherly affection, which will make all burthens lighter for her children's good, yet she is not without fears, that if the town be not favorable to her in after times, some hard measure and pressures may befall her. My request is, therefore, that it would please you to appoint some of yourselves to review the will, and to consider whether the pains of the father, deceased, or want of time, hath not occasioned him to leave some of his purposes and desires imperfect, as also to propose to the town wherein, according to the rules of justice and mercy, what the deceased intended, may be perfected, for the greater comfort both of his widow and orphans.

"Fifth. My last request concerns myself. I cannot be so unthankful to you, and so insensible of mine own and family's comfort, as not to take notice of your continued and constant love and care in your many public and solemn orders for the payment of that money due unto me about the charter: 'tis true I have never demanded it; yea, I have been truly desirous that it might have been laid out for some further public benefit in each town, but observing your loving resolution to the contrary, I have at last resolved to write unto you

(as I have also lately done to Portsmouth and Newport) about the better ordering it to my advantage. I have here (through God's providence) convenience of improving some goats; my request is, therefore, that if it may be without much trouble, you would please to order the payment of it in cattle of that kind. I have been solicited and have promised my help, about iron works, when the matter is ripe, earnestly desirous every way to further the good of the town of Providence, to which I am so much engaged, and to yourselves the loving inhabitants thereof, to whom I desire to be

"Your truly loving and ever faithful,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"For my well beloved and much respected, the inhabitants of the town of Providence.

"To Mr. Robert Williams and Mr. Thomas Harris, deputies, or either of them."

[Copied from 3 His. Col. i. p. 178.]

"*Cawcawmsqussick*, 11, 7, 48, (*so called.*)

"Dear and worthy Sir,

"Best salutations to you both and loving sister premised, wishing you eternal peace in the only Prince of it. I have longed to hear from you and to send to you since this storm arose. The report was (as most commonly all Indian reports are) absolutely false, of my removing my goods, or the least rag, &c. A fortnight since, I heard of the Mohawks coming to Pawcatuck, their rendezvous; that they were provoked by Uncas' wronging and robbing some Pawcatuck Indians the last year, and that he had dared the Mohawks, threatening, if they came, to set his ground with gobbets of their flesh; that our neighbors had given them play, (as they do every year;) yet withal I heard they were divided; some resolved to proceed, others pleaded their hunting season. We have here one Waupinhommin, a proud, desperate abuser of us, and a firebrand to stir up the natives against us, who makes it all his trade to run between the Mohawks and these, and (being a captain also himself) renders the Mohawks more terrible and powerful than the English. Between him and the chief sachems hath been great consultations, and to my knowledge, he hath persuaded them to desert their country and become one rebellious body or rout with the Mohawks, and so to defy the English, &c. I have sent also what I can inform to the commissioners. At present, (through mercy) we are in peace.

"Sir, I desire to be ever

"Yours in Christ Jesus,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"The letter I have sent by Warwick, twenty miles nearer than by Seekonk.

"For his much honored, kind friend, Mr. John Winthrop, at his house, in Nameag, these."

"Loving friends and neighbors,

"Divers of yourselves have so cried out, of the contentions of your late meetings, that (studying my quietness) I thought fit to present you with these few lines. Two words I pray you to consider.

First, as to this plantation of Providence: then as to some new plantation, if it shall please the same God of mercies who provided this, to provide another in mercy for us. 1. As to this town, although I have been called out, of late, to declare my understanding as to the bounds of Providence and Pawtuxet; and, although divers have lands and meadows in possession beyond these bounds, yet I hope that none of you think me so senseless as to put on any barbarian to molest an Englishman, or to demand a farthing of any of you.

"2. If any do (as formerly some have done, and divers have given gratuities, as Mr. Field, about Notaquoncanot and others,) I promise, that as I have been assistant to satisfy and pacify the natives round about us, so I hope I shall still while I live be helpful to any of you that may have occasion to use me.

"Now, as to some new plantation, I desire to propose that which may quench contention, may accommodate such who want, and may also return monies unto such as have of late disbursed.

"To this purpose, I desire that we be patient, and torment not ourselves and the natives, (sachems and people,) putting them upon mischievous remedies, with the great noise of twenty miles new or old purchase.

"Let us consider, if Niswosakit and Wayunckeke, and the land thereabout, may not afford a new and comfortable plantation, which we may go through with an effectual endeavor for true public good. To this end, I pray you consider, that the inhabitants of these parts, with most of the Coweset and Nipmucks, have long since forsaken the Narraganset sachems and subjected themselves to the Massachusetts. And yet they are free to sell their lands to any whom the Massachusetts shall not protest against. To this end (observing their often flights, and to stop their running to the Massachusetts) I have parlied with them, and find that about thirty pounds will cause them to leave those parts, and yield peaceable possession. I suppose, then, that the town may do well to give leave to about twenty of your inhabitants (of which I offer to be one, and know others willing) to lay down thirty shillings a man toward the purchase. Let every one of this number have liberty to remove himself, or to place a child or friend there. Let every person who shall afterward be received into the purchase lay down thirty shillings, as hath been done in Providence, which may be paid (by some order agreed on) to such as lately have disbursed monies unto the effecting of this. I offer, gratis, my time and pains, in hope that such as want may have a comfortable supply amongst us, and others made room for, who may be glad of shelter also.

"Yours to serve you,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

27, 8, 60 (*so called.*)"

"*Providence*, 13, 10, 61 (*so called.*)

"1. I testify and declare, in the holy presence of God, that when at my first coming into these parts, I obtained the lands of Seekonk of Ousamaquin, the then chief sachem on that side, the Governor of Plymouth (Mr. Winslow) wrote to me, in the name of their government, their claim of Seekonk to be in their jurisdiction, as also

their advice to remove but over the river unto this side, (where now, by God's merciful providence, we are,) and then I should be out of their claim, and be as free as themselves, and loving neighbors together.

"2. After I had obtained this place, now called Providence, of Canonicus and Miantinomo, the chief Narraganset sachems deceased, Ousamaquin, the sachem aforesaid, also deceased, laid his claim to this place also. This forced me to repair to the Narraganset sachems aforesaid, who declared that Ousamaquin was their subject, and had solemnly himself, in person, with , subjected himself and his lands unto them at the Narraganset: only now he seemed to revolt from his loyalties under the shelter of the English at Plymouth.

"3. This I declared from the Narraganset sachems to Ousamaquin, who, without any stick, acknowledged it to be true that he had so subjected as the Narraganset sachems affirmed; but withal, he affirmed that he was not subdued by war, which himself and his father had maintained against the Narragansets, but God, said he, subdued me by a plague, which swept away my people, and forced me to yield.

"4. This conviction and confession of his, together with gratuities to himself and brethren and followers, made him often profess, that he was pleased that I should here be his neighbor, and that rather because he and I had been great friends at Plymouth, and also because that his and my friends at Plymouth advised him to be at peace and friendship with me, and he hoped that our children after us would be good friends together.

"5. And whereas, there hath been often spread of Providence falling within Plymouth jurisdiction, by virtue of Ousamaquin's claims, I add unto the testimony abovesaid, that the Governor, Mr. Bradford, and other of their magistrates, declared unto me, both by conference and writing, that they and their government were satisfied, and resolved never to molest Providence, nor to claim beyond Seekonk, but to continue loving friends and neighbors (amongst the barbarians) together.

"This is the true sum and substance of many passages between our countrymen of Plymouth and Ousamaquin and me.

ROGER WILLIAMS."

[Copied from 3 His. Col. i. p. 70.]

"*Providence*, 16, 8, 76, (*ut vulgo.*)

"Sir,

"With my humble and loving respects to yourself and other honored friends, &c. I thought fit to tell you what the providence of the Most High hath brought to my hand the evening before yesterday. Two Indian children were brought to me by one Thomas Clements, who had his house burnt on the other side of the river. He was in his orchard, and two Indian children came boldly to him, the boy being about seven or eight, and the girl (his sister) three or four years old. The boy tells me, that a youth, one Mittonan, brought them to the sight of Thomas Clements, and bid them go to that man, and he would give them bread. He saith his father and mother

were taken by the Pequods and Mohegans about ten weeks ago, as they were clamming (with many more Indians) at Coweset; that their dwelling was and is at a place called Mittaubscut; that it is upon a branch of Pawtuxet river, to Coweset (their nearest salt water) about seven or eight miles; that there are about twenty houses. I cannot learn of him that there are above twenty men, beside women and children; that they live on ground-nuts, &c. and deer; that Aawayse-waukit is their sachem; and twelve days ago he sent his son, Wunnawmeneeskat, to Uncas, with a present of a basket or two of wampum. I know this sachem is much related to Plymouth, to whom he is said to be subject, but he said, (as all of them do) [he] deposited his land. I know what bargains he made with the Browns and Willets and Rhode-Island and Providence men, and the controversies between the Narragansets and them, about those lands. I know the talk abroad of the right of the three united colonies (by conquest) to this land, and the plea of Rhode-Island by the charter and commissioners. I humbly desire that this party may be brought in; the country improved (if God in mercy so please;) the English not differ about it and complaints run to the King (to unknown trouble, charge and hazard, &c.) and therefore I humbly beg of God that a committee from the four colonies may (by way of prudent and godly wisdom) prevent many inconveniences and mischiefs. I write the sum of this to the Governors of Connecticut and Rhode-Island, and humbly beg of the Father of mercies to guide you in mercy, for his mercy sake.

"Sir, your unworthy,

"R. W.

"Excuse my want of paper.

"This boy saith, there is another town to the north-east of them, with more houses than twenty, who, 'tis like, correspond to the eastward.

"To the much honored the Governor Leverett, at Boston, or the Governor Winslow, at Plymouth, present."

The following document was presented to the Court of Commissioners, mentioned on page 298 of this volume. It is inserted as valuable, though mutilated and containing severe remarks on Mr. Harris' conduct:

"The following is a true copy of an original manuscript, which is in the hand writing of Roger Williams, and contains all that is written on one sheet in my possession: the remainder of the original must have been contained in another sheet which was attached, but that is unfortunately lost, it never having come into my possession. The original is much worn and broken in the folds, and several lines required great care and attention to trace them, but I am confident that all that is written here is contained in the original.

"JOHN HOWLAND.

Providence, January 30, 1832."

"*Providence*, 18, 8, 1677, (*ut vulgo.*)

"Honored Gentlemen,

"My humble respects presented, with congratulations and prayers

to the Most High, for your merciful preservations in and through these late bloody and burning times, the peaceable travelling and assembling amongst the ruins and rubbish of these late desolations, which the Most High hath justly brought upon us. I crave your gentle leave to tell you, that I humbly conceive I am called of God to present your wisdoms with what light I can, to make your difficulties and travails the easier. I am sore grieved that a self-seeking contentious soul, who has long afflicted this town and colony, should now, with his unseasonable and unjust clamor, afflict our Royal Sovereign, his honorable Council, New and Old England, and now your honored selves, with these his contentious courses. For myself, it hath pleased God to vouchsafe me knowledge and experience of his providences in these parts, so that I should be ungratefully and treacherously silent at such a time. When his Majesty's Commissioners, Col. Nichols, &c. were here, I was chosen by this colony, one of the commissioners to treat with them and with the commissioners from Plymouth, who then were their honored Governor deceased, and honored present Governor, about our bounds. It then pleased the Father of mercies, in whose most high and holy hands the hearts of all men are, to give me such favor in their eyes, that afterward, at a great assembly at Warwick, where (that firebrand) Philip, his whole country, was challenged by the Narraganset sachems, I was sent for, and declared such transactions between old Canonicus and Ousamaquin, that the commissioners were satisfied, and confirmed unto the ungrateful monster his country. The Narraganset sachems (prompted by some English) told the commissioners, that Mr. Williams was but one witness, but the commissioners answered that they had such experience of my knowledge in these parts, and fidelity, that they valued my testimony as much as twenty witnesses.

"Among so many passages since W. Har. (so long ago) kindled the fires of contention, give me leave to trouble you with one, when if W. H. had any desire by equal and peaceable converse with men, this fire had been quenched; our General Court, Mishauntatuk men and W. Har. agreed that arbitration should heal this old sore. Arbitrators were chosen, and Mr. Thomas Willet was chosen umpire. He, when they met, told them that the arbitrators should consider every plea with equity, and allot to every one what the arbitrators' consciences told them was right and equal. Mishauntatuk men yielded, W. Carpenter, then one with W. Har., yielded. W. Har. cried out no; he was resolved, all or none; so the honored soul, Mr. Willet (as he himself told me) could not proceed, but was forced to draw up a protest to acquit himself and the arbitrators from this trust, that the obstruction might only be laid on W. Har. his shoulders, concerning whom a volume might be written, of his furious, covetous, and contentious domineering over his poor neighbors. I have presented a character of him to his Majesty, (in defence of myself against him) in my narrative against George Fox, printed at Boston. I think it not seasonable here to trouble your patience with particulars as to the matter. I humbly refer myself to my large testimony, given in writing, at a Court of Trials on the Island, before the honored gentleman, deceased, Mr. W. Brenton, then Governor. At the same

time Mr. William Arnold, father to our honored present Governor, and Stukely Westcott, father to our Governor's wife, gave in their testimony with mine, and W. Har. was cast. In that testimony, I declare not only how unrighteous, but also how simple is W. Harris his ground of pleading, viz. after Miantinomo had set us our bounds here in his own person, because of the envious clamors of some against myself, one amongst us (not I) recorded a testimony or memorandum of a courtesy added (upon request) by the sachem, in these words, *up stream without limits.* The courtesy was requested and granted, that being shortened in bounds by the sachem because of the Indians about us, it might be no offence if our few cows fed up the rivers where nobody dwelt, and home again at night. This hasty, unadvised memorandum W. H. interprets of bounds set to our town by the sachems; but he would set no bounds to our cattle, but up the streams so far as they branched or run, so far all the meadows, and at last all the uplands, must be drawn into this accidental courtesy, and yet, upon no consideration given, nor the sachem's knowledge or hand, nor witnesses, nor date, nor for what term of time this kindness should continue.

"Second. In my testimony, I have declared that Miantinomo having set such short bounds (because of the Indians) upon my motion, payments were given by us to Alexander and Philip, and the Narraganset sachems, near two hundred and fifty pounds, in their pay, for inland enlargements, according to leave granted us by the General Court upon our petition. This after purchase and satisfaction to all claimers, W. Harris puts a rotten title upon it, and calls it confirmation, a confirmation of the title and grant of *up streams without limits;* but all the sachems and Indians, when they heard of such an interpretation, they cried *commcobin,* lying and stealing, as such a cheat as stunk in their pagan nostrils.

"Honored Sirs, let me now add to my testimony, a list of several persons which the right and disposing of all or considerable part of these Narragansets, and Coweset, and Nipmuck lands, &c.

"First. The colony of Connecticut, by the King's grant and charter, by the late wars, wherein they were honorably assistant.

"Second. The colony of Plymouth, by virtue of Tacommaicon's surrender of his person and lands to their protection, and I have seen a letter from the present Governor Winslow, to Mr. Richard Smith, about the matter.

"Third. The colony of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, by grant from his Majesty and confirmation from his Majesty's commissioners, who called these lands the King's Province, and committed the ordering of it to this colony, until his Majesty further order.

"Fourth. Many eminent gentlemen of the Massachusetts and other colonies, claim by a mortgage and forfeiture of all lands belonging to Narraganset.

"Fifth. Our honored Governor, Mr. Arnold, and divers with him, are out of a round sum of money and cost, about a purchase from Tacummanan.

"Sixth. The like claim was and is made by Mr. John Brown, and Mr. Thomas Willet, honored gentlemen and their successors,

* * * from purchase with Tacummanan, and I have seen their deeds, and Col. Nichols his confirmation of them, under hand and seal, in the name of the King's Majesty.

"Seventh. Wm. Harris pleads *up streams without limits*, and confirmation from the other sachems of the *up streams*, &c.

"Eighth. Mishuntatuk men claim by purchase from Indians by possession, buildings, &c. * * * * [worn out and oblit.] * * *

"Ninth. Captain Hubbard and some others, of Hingham * * * by purchase from the Indians.

"Tenth. John Tours, of Hingham, by three purchases from Indians.

"Eleventh. William Vaughan, of Newport, and others, by Indian purchase

[The next following No. is 13: there is no 12.]

"Thirteenth. Randall, of Scituate,* and White, of Taunton, and others, by purchase from Indians.

"Fourteenth. Edward Inman, of Providence, by purchase from the natives.

"Fifteenth. The town of Warwick, who challenge twenty miles, about part of which, Will. Harris contending with them, it is said, was the first occasion of W. Har. falling in love with this his monstrous Diana *up streams without limits*, that so he might antedate and prevent (as he speaks) the blades of Warwick.

"Sixteenth. The town of Providence, by virtue of Canonicus' and Miantinomo's grant renewed to me again and again, viz. of as large a plantation and accommodation as any town in the country of New-England. It is known what favor God pleased to give me with old Canonicus, (though at a dear-bought rate) so that I had what I would (so that I observed my times of moderation;) but two or three envious and ungrateful souls among us cried out, What is R. Williams? We will have the sachem come and set our bounds for us; which he did, and (because of his Indians round about us) so sudden and so short, that we were forced to petition to our General Court for enlargement.

"Honored Sirs, there be other claims, and therefore I presume your wisdoms will send forth your proclamations to all the colonies, that all the claims may come in before your next meeting; and Oh that it would please the Most High to move the colonies' hearts to empower you, and move your hearts to be willing, (being honorably rewarded) and the hearts of the claimers to acquiesce and rest in your determination. And Oh let not the colonies of Connecticut and Rhode-Island to be offended, if I humbly beseech them, for God's sake, for the King's sake, for the country of New-England's sake, and for their own souls' and selves' and posterity's sakes, to prevent any more complaints and clamors to the King's Majesty, and agree to submit their differences to the wisdoms of such solemn commissioners chosen out of the whole country. I know there are objections, but also know that love to God, love to the country and posterity, will conquer greater matters, and I believe the King's

* The Scituate here mentioned, must be in Massachusetts, as there was no town of that name in Rhode-Island till 1730.

Majesty, himself, will give us thanks for sparing him and his honorable Council from being troubled with us.

"Honored gentlemen, if his Majesty and honorable Council knew how against all law of England, Wm. Harris thus affects New and Old England, viz. that a vast country should be purchased, and yet be but a poor courtesy from one sachem, who understood no such thing, nor they that begged it of him, who had not, nor asked any consideration for it, who was not desired to set his hand to it, nor did; nor are there the hands of witnesses, but the parties themselves, nor no date, nor term of time, for the use of feeding cows, up streams without limits, and yet these words, (*up streams without limits*) by a sudden and unwary hand so written, must be the ground of W. Har. this raising a fire about these thirty years unquenchable. If his Majesty and Council knew how many of his good subjects are claimers and competitors to these lands and meadows up the streams of Pawtuxet and Pawtucket, though only one comes thus clamoring to him, to cheat all the rest. If his Majesty and Council knew this confirmation W. H. talks of, what a grand cheat it is, stinking in the nostrils of all Indians, who subscribed to and only confirmed only such bounds as were formerly given us, and W. Harris clamors that they confirmed Miantinomo's grant of up streams without limits, a thing which they abhor to hear of, and (amonst others) was one great occasion of their late great burning and slaughtering of us." * * * *

"*Narraganset*, 10*th June*, 1682 (*ut vulgo.*)

"I testify, as in the presence of the all-making and all-seeing God, that about fifty years since, I coming into this Narraganset country, I found a great contest between three sachems, two (to wit, Canonicus and Miantinomo) were against Ousamaquin, on Plymouth side, I was forced to travel between them three, to pacify, to satisfy all their and their dependents' spirits of my honest intentions to live peaceably by them. I testify, that it was the general and constant declaration, that Canonicus his father had three sons, whereof Canonicus was the heir, and his youngest brother's son, Miantinomo, (because of youth,) was his marshal and executioner, and did nothing without his uncle Canonicus' consent; and therefore I declare to posterity, that were it not for the favor God gave me with Canonicus, none of these parts, no, not Rhode-Island, had been purchased or obtained, for I never got any thing out of Canonicus but by gift. I also profess, that, very inquisitive of what the title or denomination Narraganset should come, I heard that Narraganset was so named from a little island between Puttiquomscut and Musquomacuk on the sea and fresh water side. I went on purpose to see it; and about the place called Sugar-Loaf Hill, I saw it, and was within a pole of it, but could not learn why it was called Narraganset. I had learnt, that the Massachusetts was called so, from the Blue Hills, a little island thereabout; and Canonicus' father and ancestors, living in those southern parts, transferred and brought their authority and name into those northern parts, all along by the sea-side, as appears by the great destruction of wood all along near the sea-side; and I desire posterity to see the gracious hand of the Most High, (in whose hands are all hearts)

that when the hearts of my countrymen and friends and brethren failed me, his infinite wisdom and merits stirred up the barbarous heart of Canonicus to love me as his son to his last gasp, by which means I had not only Miantinomo and all the lowest sachems my friends, but Ousamaquin also, who, because of my great friendship with him at Plymouth, and the authority of Canonicus, consented freely, being also well gratified by me, to the Governor Winthrop and my enjoyment of Prudence, yea of Providence itself, and all the other lands I procured of Canonicus which were upon the point, and in effect whatsoever I desired of him; and I never denied him or Miantinomo whatever they desired of me as to goods or gifts or use of my boats or pinnace, and the travels of my own person, day and night, which, though men know not, nor care to know, yet the all-seeing Eye hath seen it, and his all-powerful hand hath helped me. Blessed be his holy name to eternity.

ROGER WILLIAMS."

"September 28th, 1704. I then, being at the house of Mr. Nathaniel Coddington, there being presented with this written paper, which I attest, upon oath, to be my father's own hand writing.

JOSEPH WILLIAMS, *Assistant.*"

"February 11th, 1705. True copy of the original, placed to record, and examined per me.

"WESTON CLARKE, *Recorder.*"

NOTE D. p. 180.

[From Hazard's State Papers, vol. i.]

Report of Arbitrators at Providence, containing proposals for a form of government:

"*Providence, the 27th of the 5th month, in the year (so called)* 1640.

"We, Robert Coles, Chad Browne, William Harris, and John Warren, being freely chosen by the consent of our loving friends and neighbors, the inhabitants of this town of Providence, having many differences amongst us, they being freely willing, and also bound themselves to stand to our arbitration, in all differences amongst us, to rest contented in our determination, being so betrusted, we have seriously and carefully endeavored to weigh and consider all these differences, being desirous to bring to unity and peace, although our abilities are far short in the due examination of such weighty things, yet so far as we conceive in laying all things together, we have gone the fairest and the equallest way to produce our peace.

"1. Agreed. We have, with one consent, agreed, that in the parting those particular proprieties which some of our friends and neighbors have in Pawtuxet from the general common of our town of Providence, to run upon a straight line upon a fresh spring, being in the gully at the head of that cove, running by that point of land called Sassafras, unto the town of Mashapaug, to an oak tree standing near unto the corn-field, being at this time the nearest

corn-field unto Pawtuxet, the oak tree having four marks with an axe, till some other landmark be set for a certain bound. Also we agree, that if any meadow ground lying and joining to that meadow that borders upon the river of Pawtuxet, come within the aforesaid line, which will not come within a straight line from long cove to the marked tree, then for that meadow to belong to Pawtuxet, and so beyond the town of Mashapaug from the oak tree between the two fresh rivers Pawtuxet and Wanasquatucket, of an even distance.

"II. Agreed. We have with one consent agreed that for the disposing of those lands that shall be disposed, belonging to this town of Providence, to be in the whole inhabitants by the choice of five men for general disposal, to be betrusted with disposal of lands and also of the town's stock, and all general things, and not to receive in any in six days as townsmen, but first to give the inhabitants notice to consider if any have just cause to show against the receiving of him, as you can apprehend, and to receive none but such as subscribe to this our determination. Also we agree, that if any of our neighbors do apprehend himself wronged by these or any of these five disposers, that at the general town meeting he may have a trial.

"Also, we agree for the town to choose, beside the other five men, one or more to keep record of all things belonging to the town and lying in common.

"We agree, as formerly hath been the liberties of the town, so still to hold forth liberty of conscience.

"III. Agreed, that after many considerations and consultations of our own State and also of other States abroad, in way of government, we apprehend no way so suitable to our condition as government by way of arbitration. But if men agree themselves by arbitration, no State we know of disallows that, neither do we. But if men refuse that which is but common humanity between man and man, then to compel such unreasonable persons to a reasonable way, we agree that the five disposers shall have power to compel him either to choose two men himself, or if he refuse, for them to choose two men to arbitrate his cause, and if these four men chosen by every party do end the cause, then to see their determination performed, and the faultive to pay the arbitrators for their time spent in it. But if these four men do not end it, then for the five disposers to choose three men to put an end to it. And for the certainty hereof we agree the major part of the five disposers to choose the three men, and the major part of the three men to end the cause, having power from the five disposers, by a note under their hand, to perform it; and the faultive not agreeing in the first to pay the charge of the last, and for the arbitrators to follow no employment until the cause be ended, without consent of the whole that have to do with the cause.

"Instance. In the first arbitration, the offender may offer reasonable terms of peace, and the offended may exact upon him, and refuse and trouble men beyond reasonable satisfaction; so for the last arbitrators to judge where the fault was, in not agreeing in the first, to pay the charge in the last.

"IV. Agreed, that if any person damnify any man, either in

goods or good name, and the person offended follow not the cause upon the offender, that if any person give notice to the five disposers, they shall call the party delinquent to answer by arbitration.

"Instance. Thus, if any person abuse another in person or goods, may be for peace sake a man will at present put it up, and it may so be resolve to revenge: therefore, for the peace of the State, the disposers are to look to it in the first place.

"V. Agreed, for all the whole inhabitants to combine ourselves to assist any man in the pursuit of any party delinquent, with all our best endeavors to attack him; but if any man raise a hubbub, and there be no just cause, then for the party that raised the hubbub to satisfy men for their time lost in it.

"VI. Agreed, that if any man have a difference with any of the five disposers, which cannot be deferred till general meeting of the town, then he may have the clerk call the town together at his for a trial.

"Instance. It may be a man may be to depart the land, or to a far part of the land, or his estate may lie upon a speedy trial, or the like case may fall out.

"VII. Agreed, that the town, by five men, shall give every man a deed of all his lands lying within the bounds of the plantation to hold it by for after ages.

"VIII. Agreed, that the five disposers shall, from the date hereof, meet every month day upon general things, and at the quarter day to yield a new choice, and give up their old accounts.

"IX. Agreed, that the clerk shall call the five disposers together at the month day, and the general town together every quarter, to meet upon general occasions, from the date hereof.

"X. Agreed, that the clerk is to receive for every cause that comes to the town for a trial, 4*d.*; for making each deed, 12*d.*; and to give up the book to the town at the year's end, and yield to a new choice.

"XI. Agreed, that all acts of disposal on both sides to stand since the difference.

"XII. Agreed, that every man who hath not paid in his purchase money for his plantation, shall make up his 10*s.* to be 30*s.* equal with the first purchases; and for all that are received townsmen hereafter to pay the like sum of money to the town stock.

"These being those things we have generally concluded on for our peace, we desiring our loving friends to receive as our absolute determination, laying ourselves down as subject to it."

NOTE E. page 198

The first Charter, copied from 2 *His. Coll. ix. pp.* 185–8.

"Whereas, by an ordinance of the Lords and Commons, now assembled in Parliament, bearing date the second day of November, Anno Domini 1643, Robert, Earl of Warwick, is constituted, and ordained governor in chief, and lord high admiral of all those islands and other plantations inhabited or planted by, or belonging to any his Majesty the King of England's subjects, (or which hereafter

may be inhabited and planted by, or belong to them) within the bounds, and upon the coasts of America:

"And whereas the said Lords have thought fit and thereby ordained that Philip Earl of Pembroke, Edward Earl of Manchester, William Viscount, Say and Seal, Philip Lord Wharton, John Lord Rolle, members of the House of Peers; Sir Gilbert Gerrard, Baronet, Sir Arthur Haslerig, Baronet, Sir Henry Vane, jr. Knight, Sir Benjamin Rudyard, Knight, John Pym, Oliver Cromwell, Dennis Bond, Miles Corbet, Cornelius Holland, Samuel Vassal, John Rolle, and William Spurstow, Esqrs. members of the House of Commons, should be commissioners to join in aid and assistance with the said Earl. And whereas, for the better government and defence, it is thereby ordained, that the aforesaid governor and commissioners, or the greater number of them, shall have power, and authority, from time to time, to nominate, appoint, and constitute all such subordinate governors, counsellors, commanders, officers, and agents, as they shall judge to be best affected, and most fit, and serviceable for the said islands and plantations; and to provide for, order and dispose all things, which they shall, from time to time, find most advantageous for the said plantations; and for the better security of the owners and inhabitants thereof, to assign, ratify, and confirm, so much of their afore-mentioned authority and power, and in such manner, and to such persons, as they shall judge to be fit for the better governing and preserving of the said plantations and islands, from open violences and private disturbances and distractions. And whereas there is a tract of land in the continent of America aforesaid, called by the name of Narraganset Bay, bordering northward and north-east on the patent of Massachusetts, east and south-east on Plymouth patent, south on the ocean, and on the west and northwest by the Indians called Nahigganneucks, alias Narragansets, the whole tract extending about twenty-five English miles, unto the Pequod river and country.

"And whereas, well affected and industrious English inhabitants, of the towns of Providence, Portsmouth and Newport, in the tract aforesaid, have adventured to make a nearer neighborhood and society with the great body of the Narragansets, which may, in time, by the blessing of God upon their endeavors, lay a sure foundation of happiness to all America; and have also purchased, and are purchasing of and amongst the natives, some other places, which may be convenient, both for plantations, and also for building of ships, supply of pipe staves, and other merchandise.

"And whereas the said English have represented their desire to the said Earl, and commissioners, to have their hopeful beginnings approved and confirmed, by granting unto them a free charter of civil incorporation and government; that they may order and govern their plantation in such a manner, as to maintain justice and peace, both among themselves, and towards all men with whom they shall have to do. In due consideration of the said premises, the said Robert, Earl of Warwick, governor in chief, and lord high admiral of the said plantations, and the greater number of the said commissioners, whose names and seals are hereunder written and subjoined, out of a desire to encourage the good beginnings of the said planters, do, by the authority of the aforesaid ordinance of the

Lords and Commons, give, grant, and confirm, to the aforesaid inhabitants of the towns of Providence, Portsmouth and Newport, a free and absolute charter of incorporation, to be known by the name of *The Incorporation of Providence Plantations, in the Narraganset Bay, in New-England.* Together with full power and authority, to rule themselves, and such others as shall hereafter inhabit within any part of the said tract of land, by such a form of civil government, as by voluntary consent of all, or the greater part of them, they shall find most suitable to their estate and condition; and, for that end, to make and ordain such civil laws and constitutions, and to inflict such punishments upon transgressors, and for execution thereof, so to place, and displace officers of justice, as they, or the greatest part of them, shall by free consent agree unto. *Provided, nevertheless,* that the said laws, constitutions, and punishments, for the civil government of the said plantations, be conformable to the laws of England, so far as the nature and constitution of the place will admit. And always reserving to the said Earl, and commissioners, and their successors, power and authority for to dispose the general government of that, as it stands in relation to the rest of the plantations in America, as they shall conceive, from time to time, most conducing to the general good of the said plantations, the honor of his Majesty, and the service of the State. And the said Earl and commissioners do further authorize, that the aforesaid inhabitants, for the better transacting of their public affairs, to make and use a public seal, as the known seal of the Providence Plantations, in the Narraganset Bay, in New-England. In testimony whereof, the said Robert, Earl of Warwick, and commissioners, have hereunto set their hands and seals, the fourteenth day of March, in the nineteenth year of our sovereign lord King Charles, and in the year of our Lord God, 1643.

ROBERT WARWICK,
PHILIP PEMBROKE,
SAY AND SEAL,
P. WHARTON,
ARTHUR HASLERIG,
COR. HOLLAND,
H. VANE,
SAM. VASSAL,
JOHN ROLLE,
MILES CORBET,
W. SPURSTOW.*"

NOTE F. page 226.

The following document, written, evidently, by Mr. Williams, is an appropriate introduction to the charter of the town of Providence.

* It has been alleged, with a view to lessen Mr. Williams' claim to the honor of being the chief agent in establishing liberty of conscience in Rhode-Island, that the preceding charter contains no provision for the protection of religious liberty. But it may be replied, that the instrument conveyed full power to establish any form of government, and enact any laws, which the inhabitants might deem proper, provided that they were not repugnant to the laws of England. The charter is in very general terms. It prescribes no mode of civil government, and omits, of course, any reference to religious affairs. The principles of Mr. Williams and his friends were well known to the gentlemen who signed the charter. Mr. Williams could desire nothing more than entire liberty to the inhabitants to regulate the civil and ecclesiastical concerns of the colony according to their own pleasure.

"To our loving and well-betrusted friends and neighbors, Gregory Dexter, William Wickenden, Thomas Olney, Robert Williams, Richard Waterman, Roger Williams, William Field, John Greene, John Smith, John Shippett.

"We, the greater part of the inhabitants of this plantation of Providence, having orderly chosen you at our town meeting this 16th of the 3d mo. 1647, to appear for us, at the General Court of this colony, to be held at Portsmouth, on Rhode-Island, upon the 18th of this inst. month, desiring the Lord's providence for your safe arrival there, we all voluntarily assenting, do hereby give you full power and authority as followeth: First, to act and vote for us respectively or otherwise, as if we ourselves were in person, for the settling of this General Court for the present, and for the composing of it into any figure for the future, as cause shall require. Secondly, to act and vote for us as aforesaid in the choice of all general officers, as need shall require. Thirdly, if the General Court shall consist of but ten men for each town, then you are to act accordingly for this town; and if the General Court shall be reduced into a fewer number, which, for divers considerations, we conceive may be for the best, then we give you full power to choose from among yourselves, such a number of our loving neighbors as shall answer the same figure, unto whom, being orderly chosen by you, we do give you power to transfer this our commission, giving of them full power to act and vote for us, the inhabitants of this plantation, in all general affairs, and for the settling of the island in peace and union, and for all matters that shall concern this particular town, desiring a careful respect unto these ensuing instructions. But, if the Court shall consist of ten of each town, then our desires are, that this our commission, with the ensuing instructions, may remain entire in your hands.

"First. That we may have a true copy of our charter assigned unto us by the General Court, for the proper use of our plantation.

"Secondly. We do voluntarily and are freely willing to receive and be governed by the laws of England, together with the way of administration of them, so far as the nature and constitution of this plantation will admit, desiring, so far as possibly may be, to hold a correspondency with the whole colony in that model that hath been lately shown unto us by our worthy friends of the island, if the General Court shall complete and confirm the same, or any other model as the General Court shall agree upon according to our charter.

"Thirdly. We desire to have full power and authority to transact all our home affairs, to try all manner of causes or cases, and to execute all manner of executions entirely within ourselves, excepting such cases and executions as the colony shall be pleased to reserve to general trials and executions.

"Fourthly. We desire to have full power and authority to choose, ordain, authorize and confirm, all our particular town officers, and also that the said officers shall be responsible unto our particular town, and that there may be no intermixture of general and particular officers, but that all may know their bounds and limits.

"Fifthly. We desire to have an exact and orderly way open for appeals unto General Courts, that so, if any shall be justly grieved

at any sentence passed or otherwise, he or they may make their lawful charge for relief there.

"Lastly. Whereas, it was hinted in that which our worthy friends unto us, that each town should have a charter of civil incorporation, apart, for the transacting of particular affairs, if the Court shall proceed so far as to agitate and order the same, then we give you full power, on our behalf, to move and procure any thing beside these instructions, that in your wisdom you conceive may tend unto the general peace or union of the colony and our own particular liberties and privileges, provided you do all, *or the most of you, unanimously* agree therein, and always reserving our equal votes and equal privileges in the general.

"Thus betrusting you with the premises, we commit you unto the protection and direction of the Almighty, wishing you a comfortable voyage, a happy success, and a safe return unto us again.

"Your thankful friends and neighbors,

"ROGER WILLIAMS,

Moderator."

Charter of the Town of Providence.

"Whereas, by virtue of a free and absolute charter of civil incorporation, granted to the free inhabitants of this colony of Providence, by the Right Honorable Robert, Earl of Warwick, Governor in Chief, with the rest of the honorable commoners, bearing date the 14th day of March, anno. 1643, giving and granting full powers and authority unto the said inhabitants to govern themselves and such others as shall come among them, as also to make, constitute and ordain such laws, orders and constitutions, and to inflict such punishments and penalties, as is conformable to the laws of England, so near as the nature and constitution of the place will admit, and which may best suit the estate and condition thereof, and whereas the said towns of Providence, Portsmouth, Newport and Warwick are far remote each from other, whereby so often and free intercourse of help in deciding of difference and trying of causes and the like cannot easily and at all times be had and procured of that kind is requisite; therefore, upon the petition and humble request of the freemen of the town of Providence, exhibited unto this present session of General Assembly, wherein they desire freedom and liberty to incorporate themselves into a body politic, and we, the said Assembly, having duly weighed and seriously considered the premises, and being willing and ready to provide for the ease and liberty of the people, have thought fit, and by the authority aforesaid and by these presents, do give, grant and confirm unto the free inhabitants of the town of Providence, a free and absolute charter of civil incorporation and government, to be known by the Incorporation of Providence Plantation, in the Narraganset Bay, in New-England, together with full power and authority to govern and rule themselves, and such others, as shall hereafter inhabit within any part of the said Plantation, by such a form of civil government, as by voluntary consent of all, or the greater part of them, shall be found most suitable unto their estate and condition, and to that end to make and ordain such civil orders and constitutions, to inflict such punishments upon

transgressors, and for execution thereof, and of the common statute laws of the colony, agreed unto, and the penalties, and so many of them as are not annexed already unto the colony Court of Trials, so to place and displace officers of justice, as they, or the greater part of them, shall, by one consent, agree unto. Provided, nevertheless, that the said laws, constitutions, and punishments, for the civil government of the said Plantation, be conformable to the laws of England, so far as the nature and constitution of the place will admit, yet always reserving to the aforesaid General Assembly, power and authority so to dispose the general government of that plantantion, as it stands in reference to the rest of the plantation, as they shall conceive, from time to time, most conducing to the general good of the said plantation. And we, the said Assembly, do further authorize the aforesaid inhabitants to elect and engage such aforesaid officers upon the first second day of June annually. And moreover, we authorize the said inhabitants, for the better transacting of their public affairs, to make and use a public seal, as the known seal of Providence Plantation, in the Narraganset Bay, in New-England. In testimony whereof, we, the said General Assembly, have hereunto set our hands and seal, the 14th of March, Anno 1648.

"JOHN WARNER,
Clerk of the Assembly.

Portsmouth."

"The foregoing is as correct a copy of the charter of the town of Providence, as could be made from that on parchment in the Town Clerk's office, taken this day, by and with the assistance of a copy, in the hand-writing of Joseph Brown, son of Henry, and brother to Richard Brown, who was proprietors' clerk. The parchment original not now being in all parts legible, the said copy I judge to be taken more than sixty years ago, and was of great use in decyphering that in the office.

"MOSES BROWN.

20*th* 12*th mo.* 1810."

NOTE G. page 319.

Charter of Rhode-Island, granted by King Charles II. on the 8th of July, 1663.

"Quintadecima pars Patentium Anno Regni Regis Caroli Secundi Quintodecimo.

"Charles the Second, by the grace of God, &c., to all to whom these presents shall come, greeting: Whereas we have been informed, by the petition of our trusty and well-beloved subjects, John Clarke, on the behalf of Benedict Arnold, William Brenton, William Coddington, Nicholas Easton, William Boulston, John Porter, John Smith, Samuel Gorton, John Weekes, Roger Williams, Thomas Olney, Gregory Dexter, John Coggeshall, Joseph Clarke, Randall Houlden, John Greene, John Roome, Samuel Wildbore, William Field, James Barker, Richard Tew, Thomas Harris, and William Dyre, and the rest of the purchasers and free inhabitants of our island, called Rhode-Island, and the rest of the colony of Providence

Plantations, in the Narraganset Bay, in New-England, in America: That they, pursuing with peace and loyal minds their sober, serious and religious intentions, of godly edifying themselves and one another in the holy Christian faith and worship, as they were persuaded, together with the gaining over and conversion of the poor ignorant Indian natives, in those parts of America, to the sincere profession and obedience of the same faith and worship, did not only, by the consent and good encouragement of our royal progenitors, transport themselves out of this kingdom of England, into America; but also, since their arrival there, after their first settlement amongst other of our subjects in those parts, for the avoiding of discord, and these many evils which were likely to ensue upon those, our subjects, not being able to bear, in those remote parts, their different apprehensions in religious concernments: and in pursuance of the aforesaid ends, did once again leave their desirable stations and habitations, and, with excessive labor and travail, hazard and charge, did transplant themselves into the midst of the Indian natives, who, as we are informed, are the most potent princes and people of all that country; where, by the good providences of God (from whom the plantations have taken their name) upon their labor and industry, they have not only been preserved to admiration, but have increased and prospered, and are seized and possessed, by purchase and consent of said natives, to their full content, of such lands, islands, rivers, harbors, and roads, as are very convenient, both for plantations and also for building of ships, supplying of pipe-staves and other merchandise, which lie very commodious, in many respects, for commerce, and to accommodate our southern plantations, and may much advance the trade of this our realm, and greatly enlarge the territories thereof; they having, by near neighborhood to, and friendly society with, the great body of Narraganset Indians, given them encouragement, of their own accord, to subject themselves, their people and land unto us; whereby, as is hoped, there may, in time, by the blessing of God upon their endeavors, be laid a sure foundation of happiness to all America:

"And whereas, in their humble address, they have freely declared, that it is much on their hearts (if they be permitted) to hold forth a lively experiment, that a most flourishing civil state may stand, and best be maintained, and that among our English subjects, with a full liberty in religious concernments; and that true piety, rightly grounded upon Gospel principles, will give the best and greatest security to sovereignty, and will lay in the hearts of men the strongest obligations to true loyalty:

"Now know ye, that we, being willing to encourage the hopeful undertaking of our said loyal and loving subjects, and to secure them in the free exercise and enjoyment of all the civil and religious rights appertaining to them, as our loving subjects, and to preserve unto them that liberty in the true Christian faith and worship of God, which they have sought, with so much travail, and with peaceable minds and loyal subjection to our royal progenitors and ourselves, to enjoy; and because some of the people and inhabitants of the same colony cannot, in their private opinion, conform to the public exercise of religion, according to the liturgy, form and ceremonies of the Church of England, to take or subscribe

the oaths and articles made and established in that behalf; and for that the same, by reason of the remote distances of those places, will, as we hope, be no breach of the unity and uniformity established in this nation, have therefore thought fit, and do hereby publish, grant, ordain, and declare, that our royal will and pleasure is:

"That no person, within the said colony, at any time hereafter, shall be anywise molested, punished, disquieted, or called in question, for any differences in opinion in matters of religion, who do not actually disturb the civil peace of our said colony; but that all and every person and persons may, from time to time, and at all times hereafter, freely and fully have and enjoy his own and their judgments and consciences, in matters of religious concernments, throughout the tract of land hereafter mentioned, they behaving themselves peaceably and quietly, and not using this liberty to licentiousness and profaneness, nor to the civil injury or outward disturbance of others; any law, statute, or clause therein contained, or to be contained, usage, or custom of this realm, to the contrary hereof, in anywise notwithstanding.

"And that they may be in the better capacity to defend themselves, in their just rights and liberties, against all the enemies of the Christian faith, and others, in all respects, we have further thought fit, and at the humble petition of the persons aforesaid, are graciously pleased to declare,

"That they shall have and enjoy the benefit of our late act of indemnity and free pardon, as the rest of our subjects in our other dominions and territories have, and to create or make them a body politic or corporate, with the powers and privileges hereinafter mentioned. And, accordingly, our will and pleasure is, and of our especial grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, we have ordained, constituted, and declared, and, by these presents, for us, our heirs, and successors, do ordain, constitute, and declare, that they, the said William Brenton, William Coddington, Nicholas Easton, Benedict Arnold, William Boulston, John Porter, Samuel Gorton, John Smith, John Weekes, Roger Williams, Thomas Olney, Gregory Dexter, John Coggeshall, Joseph Clarke, Randall Houlden, John Greene, John Roome, William Dyre, Samuel Wildbore, Richard Tew, William Field, Thomas Harris, James Barker, ——— Rainsborrow, ——— Williams, and John Nickson, and all such others as are now, or hereafter shall be, admitted free of the company and society of our colony of Providence Plantations, in the Narraganset Bay, in New-England, shall be, from time to time, and forever hereafter, a body corporate and politic, in fact and name, by the name of *The Governor and Company of the English Colony of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, in New-England, in America;* and that by the same name they and their successors shall and may have perpetual succession, and shall and may be persons able and capable in the law to sue and be sued, to plead and be impleaded, to answer and to be answered unto, to defend and to be defended, in all and singular suits, causes, quarrels, matters, actions, and things, of what kind or nature soever; and also to have, take, possess, acquire, and purchase lands, tenements, or hereditaments, or any goods or chattels, and the same to lease, grant, demise, alien, bargain, sell, and

dispose of, at their own will and pleasure, as other our liege people of this our realm of England, or any corporation or body politic within the same, may lawfully do.

"And further, that they, the said Governor and company, and their successors, shall and may, forever hereafter, have a common seal, to serve and use for all matters, causes, things, and affairs whatsoever, of them and their successors: and the same seal to alter, change, break, and make new, from time to time, at their will and pleasure, as they shall think fit.

"And further, we will and ordain, and, by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, declare and appoint, that, for the better ordering and managing of the affairs and business of the said company and their successors, there shall be one Governor, one Deputy Governor, and ten Assistants, to be from time to time constituted, elected and chosen, out of the freemen of the said company, for the time being, in such manner and form as is hereafter in these presents expressed; which said officers shall apply themselves to take care for the best disposing and ordering of the general business and affairs of and concerning the lands and hereditaments hereinafter mentioned to be granted, and the plantation thereof, and the government of the people there.

"And, for the better execution of our royal pleasure herein, we do, for us, our heirs and successors, assign, name, constitute, and appoint the aforesaid Benedict Arnold to be the first and present Governor of the said company, and the said William Brenton to be the Deputy Governor; and the said William Boulston, John Porter, Roger Williams, Thomas Olney, John Smith, John Greene, John Coggeshall, James Barker, William Field, and Joseph Clarke, to be the ten present Assistants of the said company, to continue in the said several offices respectively, until the first Wednesday which shall be in the month of May now next coming.

"And further, we will, and, by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, do ordain and grant, that the Governor of the said company, for the time being, or, in his absence, by occasion of sickness or otherwise, by his leave or permission, the Deputy Governor, for the time being, shall and may, from time to time, upon all occasions, give orders for the assembling of the said company, and calling them together to consult and advise of the business and affairs of the said company; and that forever hereafter, twice in every year, that is to say, on every first Wednesday in the month of May, and on every last Wednesday in October, or oftener, in case it shall be requisite, the Assistants, and such of the freemen of the said company, not exceeding six persons for Newport, four persons for each of the respective towns of Providence, Portsmouth, and Warwick, and two persons for each other place, town, or city, who shall be, from time to time, thereunto elected or deputed, by the major part of the freemen of the respective towns or places, for which they shall be so elected or deputed, shall have a general meeting or assembly, then and there to consult, advise, and determine, in and about the affairs and business of the said company and plantations.

"And further, we do, of our especial grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, give and grant unto the said Governor and com-

pany of the English colony of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, in New-England, in America, and their successors, that the Governor, or, in his absence, or by his permission, the Deputy Governor of the said company, for the time being, the Assistants and such of the freemen of the said company, as shall be so aforesaid elected or deputed, or so many of them as shall be present at such meeting or assembly, as aforesaid, shall be called the General Assembly; and that they, or the greatest part of them then present, (whereof the Governor, or Deputy Governor, and six of the Assistants at least, to be seven,) shall have, and have hereby given and granted unto them, full power and authority, from time to time, and at all times hereafter, to appoint, alter, and change such days, times, and places of meeting and general assembly, as they shall think fit; and to choose, nominate, and appoint such and so many persons as they shall think fit, and shall be willing to accept the same, to be free of the said company and body politic, and them into the same to admit; and to elect and constitute such offices and officers, and to grant such needful commissions as they shall think fit and requisite, for ordering, managing and despatching of the affairs of the said Governor and company and their successors; and from time to time to make, ordain, constitute, and repeal, such laws, statutes, orders and ordinances, forms and ceremonies of government and magistracy, as to them shall seem meet, for the good and welfare of the said company, and for the government and ordering of the lands and hereditaments herein after mentioned to be granted, and of the people that do, or at any time hereafter shall, inhabit or be within the same; so as such laws, ordinances, and constitutions, so made, be not contrary and repugnant unto, but (as near as may be) agreeable to the laws of this our realm of England, considering the nature and constitution of the place and people there; and also to appoint, order, and direct, erect and settle such places and courts of jurisdiction, for hearing and determining of all actions, cases, matters, and things, happening within the said colony and plantation, which shall be in dispute and depending there, as they shall think fit; and also to distinguish and set forth the several names and titles, duties, powers, and limits, of each court, office, and officer, superior and inferior; and also to contrive and appoint such forms of oaths and attestations, not repugnant, but (as near as may be) agreeable, as aforesaid, to the laws and statutes of this our realm, as are convenient and requisite, with respect to the due administration of justice, and due execution and discharge of all offices and places of trust, by the persons that shall be therein concerned; and also to regulate and order the way and manner of all elections to offices and places of trust, and to prescribe, limit, and distinguish the number and bounds of all places, towns, and cities, within the limits and bounds hereinafter mentioned, and not herein particularly named, that have or shall have the power of electing and sending of freemen to the said General Assembly; and also to order, direct, and authorize the imposing of lawful and reasonable fines, mulcts, imprisonment, and executing other punishments, pecuniary and corporal, upon offenders and delinquents, according to the course of other corporations, within this our kingdom of England; and again, to alter, revoke, annul, or pardon, under their common seal, or oth-

erwise, such fines, mulcts, imprisonments, sentences, judgments, and condemnations, as shall be thought fit; and to direct, rule, order, and dispose of all other matters and things, and particularly that which relates to the making of purchases of the native Indians, as to them shall seem meet; whereby our said people and inhabitants in the said plantations may be so religiously, peaceably, and civily governed, as that, by their good life and orderly conversation, they may win and invite the native Indians of the country to the knowledge and obedience of the only true God and Saviour of mankind; willing, commanding, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, ordaining and appointing, that all such laws, statutes, orders and ordinances, instructions, impositions, and directions, as shall be so made by the Governor, Deputy, Assistants, and freemen, or such number of them as aforesaid, and published in writing, under their common seal, shall be carefully and duly observed, kept, performed, and put in execution, according to the true intent and meaning of the same. And these our letters patent, or the duplicate of exemplification thereof, shall be, to all and every such officers, superior or inferior, from time to time, for the putting of the same orders, laws, statutes, ordinances, instructions, and directions, in due execution, against us, our heirs and successors, a sufficient warrant and discharge.

"And further, our will and pleasure is, and we do hereby, for us, our heirs and successors, establish and ordain, that, yearly, once in the year, forever hereafter, namely, the aforesaid Wednesday in May, and at the town of Newport, or elsewhere, if urgent occasion do require, the Governor, Deputy Governor, and Assistants of the said company, and other officers of the said company, or such of them as the General Assembly shall think fit, shall be in the said General Court or Assembly, to be held from that day or time, newly chosen for the year ensuing, by the greater part of the said company for the time being, as shall be then there present. And if it shall happen that the present Governor, Deputy Governor, and Assistants, by these presents appointed, or any such as shall hereafter be newly chosen into their respective rooms, or any of them, or any other of the officers of the said company, shall die, or be removed from his or their several offices or places, before the said general day of election, (whom we do hereby declare, for a misdemeanor or default, to be removable by the Governor, Assistants and company, or such greater part of them, in any of the said public Courts to be assembled as aforesaid,) that then, and in every such case, it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Governor, Deputy Governor, Assistants, and Company aforesaid, or such greater part of them, so to be assembled, as is aforesaid, in any of their assemblies, to proceed to a new election of one or more of their company, in the room or place, rooms or places, of such officer or officers, so dying, or removed, according to their directions. And immediately upon and after such election or elections made of such Governor, Deputy Governor, Assistant, or Assistants, or any other officer of the said company, in manner and form aforesaid, the authority, office and power, before given to the former Governor, Deputy Governor, and other officer or officers so removed, in whose stead and place new shall be chosen, shall, as to him and them, and every of them re-

spectively, cease and determine: Provided, always, and our will and pleasure is, that as well such as are by these presents appointed to be the present Governor, Deputy Governor, and Assistants of the said company, as those which shall succeed them, and all other officers to be appointed and chosen as aforesaid, shall, before the undertaking the execution of the said offices and places respectively, give their solemn engagement, by oath or otherwise, for the due and faithful performance of their duties, in their several offices and places, before such person or persons as are by these presents hereafter appointed to take and receive the same: that is to say, the said Benedict Arnold, who is herein before nominated and appointed the present Governor of the said Company, shall give the aforesaid engagement before William Brenton, or any two of the said Assistants of the said Company, unto whom we do, by these presents, give full power and authority to require and receive the same: and the said William Brenton, who is hereby before nominated and appointed the present Deputy Governor of the said Company, shall give the aforesaid engagement before the said Benedict Arnold, or any two of the Assistants of the said Company, unto whom we do, by these presents, give full power and authority to require and receive the same: and the said William Boulston, John Porter, Roger Williams, Thomas Olney, John Smith, John Greene, John Coggeshall, James Barker, William Field, and Joseph Clarke, who are herein before nominated and appointed the present Assistants of the Company, shall give the said engagement to their offices and places respectively belonging, before the said Benedict Arnold and William Brenton, or one of them, to whom respectively we do hereby give full power and authority to require, administer, or receive the same: and further, our will and pleasure is, that all and every other future Governor, or Deputy Governor, to be elected and chosen by virtue of these presents, shall give the said engagement before two or more of the said Assistants of the said Company, for the time being, unto whom we do, by these presents, give full power and authority to require, administer, or receive the same: and the said Assistants, and every of them, and all and every other officer or officers, to be hereafter elected and chosen by virtue of these presents, from time to time, shall give the like engagements to their offices and places respectively belonging, before the Governor, or Deputy Governor, for the time being, unto which said Governor, or Deputy Governor, we do, by these presents, give full power and authority to require, administer, or receive the same accordingly.

"And we do likewise, for us, our heirs and successors, give and grant unto the said Governor and Company, and their successors, by these presents, that for the more peaceably and orderly government of the said plantations, it shall and may be lawful for the Governor, Deputy Governor, Assistants, and all other officers and ministers of the said Company, in the administration of justice, and exercise of government, and the said plantations, to use, exercise, and put in execution, such methods, orders, rules, and directions, (not being contrary and repugnant to the laws and statutes of this our realm,) as have been heretofore given, used, and accustomed, in such cases respectively, to be put in practice, until at the next, or some other General Assembly, especial provision shall be made in the cases aforesaid.

"And we do further, for us, our heirs and successors, give and grant unto the said Governor and Company, and their successors, by these presents, that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Governor, or, in his absence, the Deputy Governor, and major part of the said Assistants for the time being, at any time, when the said General Assembly is not sitting, to nominate, appoint and constitute such and so many commanders, governors, and military officers, as to them shall seem requisite, for the leading, conducting, and training up the inhabitants of the said plantations in martial affairs, and for the defence and safeguard of the said plantations; that it shall and may be lawful to and for all and every such commander, governor, and military officer, that shall be so as aforesaid, or by the Governor, or, in his absence, the Deputy Governor, and six of the Assistants, and major part of the freemen of said Company, present at any general assemblies, nominated, appointed, and constituted, according to the tenor of his and their respective commissions and directions, to assemble, exercise in arms, marshal, array, and put in warlike posture, the inhabitants of said colony, for their especial defence and safety; and to lead and conduct the said inhabitants, and to encounter, repulse, and resist, by force of arms, as well by sea as by land, to kill, slay, and destroy, by all fitting ways, enterprises, and means whatsoever, all and every such person or persons as shall, at any time hereafter, attempt or enterprise the destruction, invasion, detriment, or annoyance of the said inhabitants or plantations; and to use and exercise the law martial, in such cases only as occasion shall necessarily require; and to take and surprise, by all ways and means whatsoever, all and every such person or persons, with their ship, or ships, armor, ammunition, or other goods of such persons, as shall, in hostile manner, invade, or attempt the defeating of the said plantation, or the hurt of the said company and inhabitants; and, upon just cause, to invade and destroy the native Indians, or other enemies of the said colony.

"Nevertheless, our will and pleasure is, and we do hereby declare to the rest of our colonies in New-England, that it shall not be lawful for this our said colony of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, in America, in New-England, to invade the natives inhabiting within the bounds and limits of the said colonies, without the knowledge and consent of the said other colonies. And it is hereby declared, that it shall not be lawful to or for the rest of the colonies to invade or molest the native Indians, or any other inhabitants, inhabiting within the bounds or limits hereafter mentioned, (they having subjected themselves unto us, and being by us taken into our special protection,) without the knowledge and consent of the Governor and Company of our colony of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations.

"Also, our will and pleasure is, and we do hereby declare unto all Christian kings, princes, and states, that, if any person, who shall hereafter be of the said Company or Plantation, or any other, by appointment of the said Governor and Company, for the time being, shall, at any time or times hereafter, rob or spoil, by sea or land, or do any hurt, or unlawful hostility, to any of the subjects of us, our heirs and successors, or to any of the subjects of any prince or state, being then in league with us, our heirs and successors, upon com-

plaint of such injury done to any such prince or state, or their subjects, we, our heirs and successors, will make open proclamation, within any part of our realm of England, fit for that purpose, that the person or persons committing any such robbery or spoil, shall, within the time limited by such proclamation, make full restitution or satisfaction of all such injuries done or committed, so as the said prince, or others, so complaining, may be fully satisfied and contented; and if the said person or persons, who shall commit any such robbery or spoil, shall not make satisfaction accordingly, within such time so to be limited, that then we, our heirs and successors, will put such person or persons out of our allegiance and protection; and, that then it shall and may be lawful and free for all princes or others to prosecute with hostility such offenders, and every of them, their and every of their procurers, aiders, abettors, and counsellors, in that behalf.

"Provided, also, and our express will and pleasure is, and we do, by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, ordain and appoint, that these presents shall not in any manner hinder any of our loving subjects whatsoever from using and exercising the trade of fishing upon the coast of New-England, in America; but that they, and every or any of them, shall have full and free power and liberty to continue and use the trade of fishing upon the said coast; in any of the seas thereunto adjoining, or any arms of the sea, or salt water rivers and creeks, where they have been accustomed to fish; and to build and set upon the waste land, belonging to the said colony and plantations, such wharves, stages, and work-houses, as shall be necessary for the salting, drying, and keeping of their fish, to be taken or gotten upon that coast.

"And further, for the encouragement of the inhabitants of our said colony of Providence Plantations to set upon the business of taking whales, it shall be lawful for them, or any of them, having struck a whale, dubertus, or other great fish, it or them to pursue unto that coast, or into any bay, river, cove, creek, or shore, belonging thereto, and it or them upon the said coast, or in the said bay, river, cove, creek, or shore, belonging thereto, to kill and order for the best advantage, without molestation, they making no wilful waste or spoil; any thing in these presents contained, or any other matter or thing, to the contrary notwithstanding.

"And further, also, we are graciously pleased, and do hereby declare, that if any of the inhabitants of our said colony do set upon the planting of vineyards, (the soil and climate both seeming naturally to concur to the production of vines,) or be industrious in the discovery of fishing banks, in or about the said colony, we will, from time to time, give and allow all due and fitting encouragement therein, as to others in cases of a like nature.

"And further, of our more ample grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, we have given and granted, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, do give and grant unto the said Governor and Company of the English colony of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, in the Narraganset Bay, in New-England, in America, and to every inhabitant there, and to every person and persons trading thither, and to every such person or persons as are

or shall be free of the said colony, full power and authority, from time to time, and at all times hereafter, to take, ship, transport, and carry away, out of any of our realms and dominions, for and towards the plantation and defence of the said colony, such and so many of our loving subjects and strangers, as shall or will, willingly, accompany them in and to their said colony and plantations, except such person or persons as are or shall be therein restrained by us, our heirs and successors, or any law or statute of this realm: and also to ship and transport all and all manner of goods, chattels, merchandise, and other things whatsoever, that are or shall be useful, or necessary for the said plantations, and defence thereof, and usually transported, and not prohibited by any law or statute of this our realm; yielding and paying unto us, our heirs and successors, such duties, customs, and subsidies, as are or ought to be paid or payable for the same.

"And further, our will and pleasure is, and we do, for us, our heirs and successors, ordain, declare, and grant, unto the said Governor and Company, and their successors, that all and every the subjects of us, our heirs and successors, which are already planted and settled within our said colony of Providence Plantations, or which shall hereafter go to inhabit within the said colony, and all and every of their children which have been born there, or which shall happen hereafter to be born there, or on the sea, going thither, or returning from thence, shall have and enjoy all liberties and immunities of free and natural subjects, within any of the dominions of us, our heirs and successors, to all intents, constructions and purposes whatsoever, as if they and every of them were born within the realm of England.

"And further, know ye, that we, of our more abundant grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, have given, granted, and confirmed, and, by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, do give, grant, and confirm unto the said Governor and Company, and their successors, all that part of our dominions, in New-England, in America, containing the Nahantick and Nanhyganset alias Narraganset Bay, and countries and parts adjacent, bounded on the west or westerly, to the middle or channel of a river there, commonly called and known by the name of Pawcatuck alias Pawcawtuck river; and so, along the said river, as the greater or middle stream thereof stretches or lies up into the north country northward unto the head thereof, and from thence, by a straight line drawn due north, until it meet with the south line of the Massachusetts colony; and on the north or northerly by the aforesaid south or southerly line of the Massachusetts colony or plantation, and extending towards the east or eastwardly three English miles, to the east and northeast of the most eastern and north-eastern parts of the aforesaid Narraganset Bay, as the said Bay lieth or extendeth itself from the ocean, on the south or southwardly, unto the mouth of the river which runneth towards the town of Providence; and from thence, along the eastwardly side or bank of the said river, (higher called by the name of Seacunck) up to the falls called Patucket Falls, being the most westwardly line of Plymouth colony; and so, from the said falls, in a straight line, due north, until it meet with the afore-

said line of the Massachusetts colony, and bounded on the south by the ocean, and in particular the lands belonging to the town of Providence, Pawtuxet, Warwick, Misquammacock, alias Pawcatuck, and the rest upon the main land, in the tract aforesaid, together with Rhode-Island, Block-Island, and all the rest of the islands and banks in Narraganset bay, and bordering upon the coast of the tract aforesaid, (Fisher's Island only excepted) together with all firm lands, soils, grounds, havens, ports, rivers, waters, fishings, mines royal, and all other mines, minerals, precious stones, quarries, woods, wood-grounds, rocks, slates, and all and singular other commodities, jurisdictions, royalties, privileges, franchises, pre-eminences, and hereditaments whatsoever, within the said tract, bounds, lands, and islands aforesaid, to them or any of them belonging, or in any wise appertaining; to have and to hold the same, unto the said Governor and company, and their successors forever, upon trust, for the use and benefit of themselves and their associates, freemen of the said colony, their heirs and assigns;—to be holden of us, our heirs and successors, as of the manor of East Greenwich, in our county of Kent, in free and common soccage, and not in capite, nor by knight's service; yielding and paying therefor, to us, our heirs and successors, only the fifth part of all the ore of gold and silver which, from time to time, and at all times hereafter, shall be there gotten, had, or obtained, in lieu and satisfaction of all services, duties, fines, forfeitures, made or to be made, claims, or demands whatsoever, to be to us, our heirs, or successors, therefore or thereabout rendered, made, or paid; any grant or clause in a late grant to the Governor and Company of Connecticut colony, in America, to the contrary thereof in any wise notwithstanding; the aforesaid Pawcatuck river having been yielded, after much debate, for the fixed and certain bounds between these our said colonies, by the agents thereof, who have also agreed, that the said Pawcatuck river shall also be called alias Narogancett or Narraganset river, and to prevent future disputes, that otherwise might arise thereby, forever hereafter shall be construed, deemed, and taken to be the Narraganset river, in our late grant to Connecticut colony, mentioned as the easterly bounds of that colony.

"And further, our will and pleasure is, that, in all matters of public controversies, which may fall out between our colony of Providence Plantations, to make their appeal therein to us, our heirs and successors, for redress in such cases, within this our realm of England; and that it shall be lawful to and for the inhabitants of the said colony of Providence Plantations, without let or molestation, to pass and repass with freedom, into and through the rest of the English colonies, upon their lawful and civil occasions, and to converse and hold commerce and trade with such of the inhabitants of our other English colonies, as shall be willing to admit them thereunto, they behaving themselves peaceably among them, any act, clause, or sentence, in any of the said colonies provided, or that shall be provided, to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding.

"And lastly, we do, for us, our heirs and successors, ordain and grant unto the said Governor and Company, and their successors, by these presents, that these our letters patent shall be firm, good, effectual, and available, in all things in the law, to all intents, con-

structions, and purposes whatsoever, according to our true intent and meaning herein before declared, and shall be construed, reputed, and adjudged, in all cases most favorable on the behalf, and for the best benefit and behoof of the said Governor and Company, and their successors, although express mention, &c. In witness, &c.

"Witness, &c. *Per Ipsum Regem.*"

NOTE H. page 355.

The following letter from that indefatigable antiquary, the late Theodore Foster, Esq. contains some interesting information, concerning the residence of Roger Williams, the time of his death, and the place where he was buried. It is copied from the Rhode-Island American, of July 16, 1819:

"To Mr. Williams Thayer, Jr.

"*Foster, R. I. May* 21, 1819.

"Dear Sir,

"I have, this afternoon, had the pleasure of receiving your polite letter of yesterday, requesting information relative to your worthy and distinguished ancestor, Mr. Roger Williams, the Founder of our State, and for some years its Chief Magistrate and patron. He was chosen President, Sept. 13, 1654, after his return from his second successful agency with the Long Parliament in England. In that office he was continued, by repeated elections, until May 19, 1657, when he was succeeded in it by Benedict Arnold.

"In answer to your queries, "At what time did Roger Williams depart this life? Where did he dwell in Providence? and where was he buried?" I can only say, that I never met with any record, printed or manuscript, which I thought more correct, as to the time of his death, than the account given by Mr. Backus, in his History of the Baptists, vol. i. p. 515. Governor Hutchinson, in his History of Massachusetts, vol. i. p. 43, says, that he died in the year 1682, forty-eight years after his banishment. Now, adding forty-eight years to the year of his removal from Salem to Providence, which, undoubtedly, was in 1636, it makes the year 1684 as the year of his death, though Governor Hutchinson, by mistake, says it was in 1682. From Mr. Williams' writings, it appears that he was born in 1599; and, as he died in the eighty-fourth year of his age, it will make the year 1683, as stated by Mr. Backus, that in which his death happened.

"It appears of record, that on the 16th day of January, 1683, Mr. Williams, with others, signed a settlement of a controversy which had long existed between some of the people of Providence and some of those of Pawtuxet, relative to the Pawtuxet purchase; and that, on the 10th day of May following, John Thornton, in a letter to Mr. Hubbard, mentioned his death. So he must have died between January 16 and May 10, 1683.

"The freemen of Providence, in town meeting, July 15, 1771, appointed a committee, viz. Stephen Hopkins, Amos Atwell, and Da-

rius Sessions, Esqrs. to draft an inscription for a monument, which it was then intended to erect to his memory. In their vote on that occasion, Mr. Williams was called "*the Founder of the Town and Colony.*" The committee did nothing, and the business has slept from that time. In the summer of that year, (forty-eight years ago) when much was said respecting a monument for him, though nothing could be agreed on, his grave was shown to me, near the east end of the house lot now owned by Mr. Dorr. The foot grave-stone was then gone, and the top of the other broken off, so that only the lower part appeared, without any inscription. There were several other grave-stones near his, in memory of some of the Ashton family, who were connected with Mr. Williams, on which the inscriptions were entire. Thinking it a duty to preserve some knowledge of the place, where was deposited the dust of the founder of our State, I have repeatedly, of late years, sought for those monuments, without being able to find any traces of them; though I think I can, within a rod or two, show where they were placed, so that, on digging the ground, the graves may, perhaps, be discovered.

"There is no doubt but that Mr. Williams lived, the latter part of his life, upon the estate whereon he was buried, which was called the Crawford estate, after the connection of the Crawford and Fenner families, by the marriage of Gideon Crawford with Freelove Fenner, daughter of Arthur Fenner, April 13, 1687; which Arthur Fenner, July 31, 1688, gave to his three daughters, Freelove, Bethiah and Phebe, thirty-one acres of land, "in Providence Neck," all which became the property of Mr. Crawford, who married Freelove Fenner, and I believe was exchanged or negotiated for Mr. Williams' estate, near the spring.*

As Mr. Williams' grave and others before mentioned were on that estate, I applied, on the 12th of May, 1813, to Mrs. Mary Tripe, a descendant of the said Gideon Crawford, then in the seventy-second year of her age, for information respecting them. She was a woman of intelligence, good sense and information, and careful of what she

*"Mr. Williams sold from his estate a lot, forty-eight feet wide on the street, to Mr. Gabriel Bernon, a very respectable French gentleman, of great property, and sincere religion, who came from Rochelle, France, where he had suffered much, and had been imprisoned two years, on account of his religion, which led Mr. Williams greatly to esteem and respect him. He was born at Rochelle, April 6, 1644; lived ten years at Newport and Narraganset, and died in Providence, February 1, 1736, in the ninety-second year of his age. He had ten children by his first wife, eight of whom, with herself, came with him to this State. He had four children by his second wife, Mary Harris. He was buried under the old Episcopal church, and was the ancestor of many respectable families, in various parts of the State, in which are great numbers of his posterity, connected with the names of Coddington, Helme, Whipple, Crawford, Jenckes, Allen, Tourtellot, &c.

"The lot thus sold to Mr. Bernon contained the famous spring where Mr. Williams landed, when he came to Providence in a canoe, with Thomas Angell, in 1636. Governor Hutchinson says: "The inhabitants have a veneration for a spring, which runs from the hill into the river, above the great bridge. The sight of this spring caused him to stop his canoe, and land there." Mass. His. vol. ii, p. 41.

"This is the same lot where Mr. Nehemiah Dodge is now building a large brick house, near the stone Episcopal church, a few feet eastward of the spring, of which there is now no appearance, otherwise than at the bottom of his well, of a considerable depth, from which it finds a covered outlet to the river; an instance, among a thousand others, of the great alteration in the town, since its first settlement."

said. She informed me that your ancestor, Roger Williams, lived in a house which was on the east side of the main street, a little south of the Episcopal church, the foundation whereof then remained, which she showed me, within sight of her house, and which I believe is also now removed, as I saw nothing of it, on looking for it, the last time I was in Providence. So transitory are all things pertaining to humanity! She told me there was no doubt that Mr. Williams was buried at the place which I have mentioned; that she had always been told so; and that she remembered seeing fruit trees growing there, when she was a girl; that her father once owned that and the estate where Moses Brown, Esq. now lives; and that there was a gang-way, fourteen feet wide, south of Mrs. Tripe's house, given by Mr. Williams, to go to his spring, originally laid out from river to river, near which gang-way his house stood.

"I have an original letter, in the hand-writing of Mr. Williams, to the freemen of the town of Providence, dated "11, 3, 60," [May 11, 1660] claiming personal estate of John Clowson, who had been murdered by Waumaion, an Indian, on the 4th day of the preceding January, containing additional proof that Mr. Williams then lived near the spring before mentioned.

"I can give no satisfactory information relative to the other queries in your letter, but what may be derived from the records of Providence; nor have I any recollection of any circumstance which indicated that Mr. Williams left a will.

"It gives me pleasure to be able to furnish useful information to any of my friends, from documents in my possession. Though in haste, I have written diffusely, in answer to your letter. So far as it goes, I believe the information it contains is correct. That it may in some degree, answer your expectations, and the purpose for which you wanted it, is the wish of

"Yours, respectfully,
THEODORE FOSTER."

The following extracts from a letter, inserted in the American, of July 20, 1819, deserve to be inserted, as illustrative of the subject before us:

"*Providence, July* 17, 1819.

"Messrs. Goddard & Knowles,

"Observing, in your paper of yesterday, a letter from the Hon. Theodore Foster, respecting Roger Williams, the founder of this State, I am induced to lay before the public the following facts, communicated to me by the late Capt. Nathaniel Packard, of this town, about the year 1808. About fifty years since, there was some stir about erecting a monument to commemorate that distinguished divine, civilian and statesman, and there was a difference of opinion as to the place of his burial. Capt. Packard was then absent, but had he been present, he could have pointed out the very spot where Roger Williams' house stood, and where he was buried. When he was about ten years old, one of the descendants of Roger Williams was buried at the family burying-ground, on the lot right back of the house of Sullivan Dorr, Esq. Those who dug the grave, dug directly upon the foot of the coffin, which the people there present told him

was Roger Williams'. They let him down into the new grave, and he saw the bones in the coffin, which was not wholly decayed, and the bones had a long, mossy substance upon them. Roger Williams was born in 1599, and died in 1683. Captain Packard was son of Fearnot Packard, who lived in a small house, standing a little south of the house of Philip Allen, Esq. and about fifty feet south of the noted spring. In this house Captain Packard was born, in 1730, and died in 1809, being seventy-nine years old. He was born forty-seven years after Williams died. So if he was ten years old when Williams' descendant was buried, it was fifty-seven years after Williams died.

"As the people at the funeral of Williams' descendant told Captain Packard that Williams was buried in the grave dug upon, there can be no doubt that Roger Williams was buried in the lot back of Mr. Dorr's house, in his own family burying-ground, where I myself have seen stones to a number of the graves, within twenty years, which have since been removed. But, though the stones are not to be found, yet I cannot but venerate the spot where, I have no doubt, the dust of one of the greatest and best men that ever lived mingled with its mother earth.

"Mrs. Nabby Packard, widow of Captain Packard, who is eighty-five years old, told me, this day, that her late husband had often mentioned the above facts to her; and his daughter, Miss Mary Packard, states, that her father often told her the same.

* * * * * * * *

"As to where Roger Williams' dwelling-house stood, Captain Nathaniel Packard told me, that when he was a boy, he used to play in a cellar, which had a large peach-tree in it, which cellar, he said, was situate on a lot back of the house built by Thomas Owen, father of the late Hon. Daniel Owen, afterwards owned by Levi Whipple, and now owned by the heirs of the late Simeon H. Olney, directly north of the house owned by Ezra Hubbard, and near where an outbuilding now stands. The people, at that time, called it Roger Williams' cellar. Mrs. Nabby Packard, Nathaniel Packard's widow, told me this day, that she came to live where she now lives, when she was eighteen years old, which was sixty-seven years ago, and that she well remembers the cellar, and that it was called Roger Williams' cellar. The site of the house was a little east of Roger Williams' spring, and situate directly on the road laid out from said spring, to the upper ferry, (now Central Bridge.) The spring is called Roger Williams' spring, and he owned the land all around it, being the very place where he sat upon the rock, and conversed with the Indians. The above facts, derived from Captain N. Packard, his widow and daughter, are indubitable evidences, that his house was where it is above stated to have been, and that he was buried in the lot back of Mr. Dorr's house."

It is hoped, that the prosperous city of Providence will not, much longer, endure the reproach of permitting her founder's grave to remain without any memorial to indicate the spot. It is already too late, perhaps, to ascertain the precise place where his ashes lie, but it may be found, within a few feet. The ground around it ought to be

obtained by the city, a handsome monument erected, and the whole enclosed within a permanent iron fence, and adorned with trees, shrubbery, &c. It would thus form an interesting spot, which the citizen would visit with interest, and which the stranger would seek as one of the principal points of attraction. It has been proposed to erect a monument in some other part of the city; but it would be absurd to place it any where else than on the spot where his bones are interred. The spot itself is interesting, because he owned it, and was buried there. It is surprising that his children ever allowed it to be sold.

In regard to the family of Mr. Williams, little is now known. Even his lineal descendants seem to have a very scanty knowledge of their ancestor. A few facts have been collected, though I cannot vouch for their accuracy.

His wife, it is supposed, survived him, but when and where she died, we know not.

It is nearly certain, that he left no will. He probably had very little, if any property, to bequeath.

He had six children:

1. Mary, born at Plymouth, the first week in August, 1633. Whether she was married or not, is uncertain. In Mr. Williams' book against George Fox, he speaks of his daughter *Hart*, as residing in Newport. Mary may have married a person of this name.

2. Freeborn, born at Salem, the end of October, 1635. Of her, nothing further is known to me.

3. Providence, born at Providence, the end of September, 1638. He died unmarried, in Newport [another account says, in Providence] March, 1685-6.

4. Marcy, born July 15, 1640. She was married to Resolved Waterman, of Warwick, by whom she had four sons and one daughter. After his death, she was married to Samuel Winsor, of Providence, by whom she had two sons and one daughter. After his death, she was married to ——— Rhodes, of Pawtuxet, by whom she had several children.

5. Daniel, born February 15, 1641-2. He married Rebecca Power, widow of Nicholas Power. He died May 14, 1712. He had five sons, Peleg, Roger, Daniel, Joseph, Providence. Peleg had four sons, Peleg, Robert, Silas, Timothy; and two daughters, who were married to Daniel Fisk and John Fisk. Roger had two daughters, one of whom was married to Jonathan Tourtellot, and the other to David Thayer. Daniel died unmarried. Joseph had two sons, Benoni and Goliah. Providence had one daughter, Elizabeth.

6. Joseph, born the beginning of December, 1643. He married Lydia Olney, December 17, 1669. He had three sons, Joseph, Thomas and James. Joseph had one son, Jeremiah, and eight daughters, who were married to Francis Atwood, William Randall, Joseph Randall, John Randall, William Dyer, Benjamin Potter, Benjamin Congdon, John Dyer. Thomas had three sons, Joseph, Thomas and John, and several daughters. James had four sons, James, Nathaniel, Joseph and Nathan.

Joseph Williams lived, for several years, on a farm in Cranston, three or four miles from Providence, where he died, August

17, 1724, in the eighty-first year of his age, and was buried in the family burying ground, on the farm, where his grave stone now stands, with this inscription:

"Here lies the body of Joseph Williams, Esq. son of Roger Williams, Esq. who was the first white man that came to Providence. He was born 1644. He died August 17, 1724, in the eighty-first year of his age.

In King Philip's war, he courageously went through,
And the native Indians he bravely did subdue,
And now he's gone down to the grave, and he will be no more,
Until it please Almighty God his body to restore,
Into some proper shape, as he thinks fit to be,
Perhaps like a grain of wheat, as Paul sets forth, you see.
(*Corinthians, 1st book, 15th chapter, 37th verse.*)"

His wife died a few days after him, and was buried by his side. Her grave-stone bears this inscription:

"In memory of Lydia Williams, wife of Joseph Williams, Esq. who died September 9, 1724, in the eightieth year of her age."

In the same yard, is the grave of their youngest son. The stone has this inscription:

"Here lies the body of James Williams, son of Joseph Williams and Lydia his wife, who was born September 24, 1680, died June 25, 1757, in the seventy-seventh year of his age.

He was of a moderate temper and easy mind,
He to peace was chiefly inclined;
In peace he did live, in peace he would be,
We hope it may last to eternity."

Note I. p. 389.

That Mr. Williams ought to be regarded as the founder of the State of Rhode-Island, cannot be denied. His settlement of Providence, the first town in the State; his services in procuring the cession of the island by the Indians; his efforts to procure the first charter, and his various sacrifices and toils for the welfare of the whole colony, entitle him to the merit of being considered as the founder, though other men, like Mr. Clarke, rendered great and important services. Mr. Williams claims this honor, in his letter inserted on page 349 of this volume.

His principles have steadily prevailed in Rhode-Island, till the present hour. No man has ever been molested, on account of his religious principles. Gentlemen, of all the existing denominations, have been elected magistrates. Mr. Callender said, in 1738: "The civil state has flourished, as well as if secured by ever so many penal laws, and an Inquisition to put them in execution. Our civil officers have been chosen out of every religious society, and the public peace has been as well preserved, and the public councils as well conducted, as we could have expected, had we been assisted by ever so many religious tests."—p. 107.

In respect to the religious concerns of the colony, it may be said, that if they had been such as they have sometimes been represented, an argument could not fairly be drawn from them unfriendly to Mr.

Williams' principles. It must be recollected, that intolerance prevailed in the neighboring colonies, and Rhode-Island was a refuge for men of all opinions. There was consequently a great variety of sects, all weak, at first, and unable to do much towards the support of religion. Rhode-Island thus suffered from the intolerance of her neighbors; for if they had granted the enjoyment of religous liberty to their citizens, many who went to Rhode-Island, and created disturbances there, would have remained in the other colonies. The difficulties which arose, in the early part of the history of Rhode-Island, are rather proofs of the evils of intolerance in the other colonies, than evidences of the injurious tendencies of Mr. Williams' doctrines. If all the uneasy and discordant spirits in the other States of New-England were driven, by the force of intolerant laws, into Massachusetts, she would speedily lose some portion of her high character for morality and good order.

But the state of religion in Rhode-Island has been misrepresented. Mr. Callender, nearly a hundred years ago, vindicated the character of the State. He said, that there were, in the fourteen towns which then composed the state,* thirty religious societies, all of which were then supplied with ministers, except probably the meetings of Friends. Of these societies, nine were Baptists, nine Friends, five Congregationalists, five Episcopalians, and two Sabbatarians.† Mr. Callender says, "Thus, notwithstanding all the liberty and indulgence here allowed, and notwithstanding the inhabitants have been represented as living without a public worship, and as ungospellized plantations, we see there is some form of godliness every where maintained."—p. 68. He says, in another place:

"I take it to have been no dishonor to the colony, that Christians, of every denomination, were suffered to lead quiet and peaceable lives, without any fines, or punishments for their speculative opinions, or for using those external forms of worship, they believed God had appointed, and would accept. Bigots may call this confusion and disorder, and it may be so, according to their poor worldly notions of religion, and the kingdom of Christ. But the pretended order of human authority, assuming the place and prerogatives of Jesus Christ, and trampling on the consciences of his subjects, is, as Mr. R. Williams most justly calls it, "monstrous disorder."—p. 50.

"Notwithstanding our constitution left every one to his own liberty, and his conscience; and notwithstanding the variety of opinions that were entertained, and notwithstanding some may have con-

* These towns were, in the order of their settlement or incorporation: Providence, 1636; Portsmouth, 1637–8; Newport, 1638–9; Warwick, 1642–3; Westerly, 1665; New Shoreham, 1672; East-Greenwich, 1677; Jamestown, 1678; North-Kingstown, and South-Kingstown, 1722; Smithfield, Glocester, and Scituate, 1730; Charlestown, 1738. In 1730, the whole number of inhabitants in the colony, was 17,935. The towns of Burrillville, Cranston, Cumberland, Foster, Johnston, North-Providence, Little-Compton, Middletown, Tiverton, Coventry, West-Greenwich, Exeter, Hopkinton, Richmond, Barrington, Bristol, and Warren, have been since added, making the total number of towns thirty-one. Population, in 1830, 97,212.

† This list shows how unjustly some persons, who have chosen to vilify Rhode-Island, have made the Baptists responsible for every thing which was done, or neglected. The Baptists have always, perhaps, been more numerous than any other denomination, but they have been a minority of the whole community. In 1738, it seems, they had but nine, out of thirty religious societies or churches.

tracted too great an indifference to any social worship, yet I am well assured, there scarce ever was a time, the hundred years past, in which there was not a weekly public worship of God, attended by Christians, on this island, and in the other first towns of the colony."—p. 51.

It is believed, that at the present time, there are as many religious societies in Rhode-Island, as in other States, in proportion to the population, and that the ministry is as well supported, though it is done by the voluntary liberality of the respective societies. The state of morality and religion would, it is believed, bear a favorable comparison with that in other States.

But the true test of the effects of Mr. Williams' principles is their operation on a large scale. The religious liberty which prevails in the United States demonstrates, that religion may be sustained, and diffused, without any dependence on the civil power. It is believed, that in no other nation on earth, are the principles of Christianity so efficacious in their influence on the great mass of the inhabitants; in no other country, are revivals of religion so frequent; in no other country, are there so few crimes. Here we leave the argument. May the principles of Roger Williams soon prevail in every land, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

FULLER'S WORKS, COMPLETE.

LINCOLN, EDMANDS & CO. have recently published this valuable work, in two large octavo volumes, on a fair burgeois type and fine paper, at the very reasonable price of 6 dollars. The cost of the former edition (14 dollars) precluded many students from replenishing their libraries; and they are now gratified in being able to posses a work so replete with *doctrinal* arguments and *practical* religion. No Christian can read Fuller without having his impulses to action quickened—and every student ought to *study* him, if he wishes to arm himself against the attempts of every enemy.

Since this edition has been issued, several perodicals have noticed it with full commendation. We have recently given extracts from notices in the Boston Recorder, Christian Watchman, &c.—and we now make a few extracts from an able review of the work, which appeared in the October number of the American Baptist Magazine. It was written by the President of a College, at the South, and is admired for its elegant and just view of the sentiments of this great author.

He says :—" This work, in the material and style of execution, is highly creditable to the American press. The publishers, in issuing this work, have conferred an obligation upon community, and will, doubtless, be rewarded in a liberal return of their investment. Mr. Fuller was among the few extraordinary men who have ever appeared in this world. He possessed great vigor of intellect, an uncommon share of good sense, inflexible integrity, and the most ardent love for truth. All his powers, therefore, were early consecrated to the service of the church. His mind was turned, even before he entered the ministry, to the study of those great truths, which involve the highest honor of God, and the dearest interests of man. These truths he embraced with all the affections of his heart, and maintained with wonderfnl acuteness, and by invincible arguments; for they were indeed the sheet-anchor of his soul. He possessed very clear and consistent views of human depravity, and of the grounds of moral obligation. To gain them, however, he had to endure heavy trials and severe studies.

" The grand design of Mr. Fuller, as a writer, was to produce moral action. He believed in the divine purpose, that the rest of heaven shall be gained through constant vigilance and labor. In this way the Christian character is to be formed, and the soul fitted for future blessedness. But notwithstanding the necessity of this painful care and effort, man is much inclined to be heedless and slothful; and this proneness has been strengthened by ingenious and plausible theories in religion. Of this truth Mr. Fuller had abundant evidence. In his life and travels, he witnessed the hyper-calvinistic, or antinomian spirit, sweeping over the churches, withering up, like the Sirocco's blast, their vital principle, and converting them into barren wastes. Nor was the influence of this spirit confined to professors, Its legitimate tendency is, to keep both saints and sinners in a state of inaction. For it exalts the former above obligation, and sinks the latter below it. This spirit he knew had its origin in the false notion, that human apostacy releases sinners from the

duties of piety, and that the gospel dispensation is designed to render the law useless, and to excuse the people of God from complying with its requirements. Over these things Mr. Fuller prayed and wept. And when he took up his pen, it was his chief purpose to correct these errors, and thus to rouse the church from their paralyzing influence. In accomplishing his object, he resorted to no unwarranted expedients. He believed that God had provided adequate agents to sway the soul, and that these are principally three: truth, motive, and the influences of the Divine Spirit. Truth convinces the understanding, motive affects the heart, and the Spirit overcomes the will. The great cause, he believed, why the means of salvation have produced so little effect, is—that their power has been greatly weakened by human devices. Truth has been eclipsed, conscience stupified, and the heart allured by unscriptural motives. The constant aim, therefore, of this eminent man, was to disperse the darkness, in which truth was involved, that it might shine forth in all its heavenly lustre. He labored to remove from the divine law the deadening swathe with which it had been bound, by those who feared its edge, that it might act with unobstructed force. It has been said of the immortal Butler, that he has done more than any other man to restore to conscience her sovereign sway in the human soul. So we may say, that Fuller has, probably, done more than any other divine, to restore to the law of God, or to gospel truth, its sacred dominion in the economy of grace. Truth and the voice of conscience are the two great ruling powers in the moral world. Hence the well-being of society requires, that they should be constantly kept in the clearest light. And that man, who is the instrument, in giving these chief elements of power the freest action upon the human mind, renders the most important service to his fellow-men.

"There is another light in which we are anxious the publications of Mr. Fuller should be viewed—in their adaptedness to prevent two evils, to which the Christian world at the present day are peculiarly exposed. These are, first, losing sight of that mysterious and divine agency, on which the success of all their efforts must depend. And, second, failing to keep in full view those cardinal truths of the gospel, by which they must gain and support all their victories in the empire of darkness. In every period the church has been inclined to forget her dependence on divine influences; but, perhaps, never so much so, as in the present.

"Though for thirty years we have been conversant with the writings of Mr. Fuller, yet we must say, that this revision of them has greatly heightened them in our estimation. And viewing them in the light we do, we cannot but indulge the belief, that they will, for ages yet to come, continue to enlighten and bless the church of Christ."

This edition was printed from a London edition, just revised, by Mr. A. G. Fuller, who says, in his preface, "In presenting to the public what has long been called for, viz. a complete edition of the works of my revered father, it is unnecessary to offer any remarks on the character of the writings, most of which have for many years been before the public, and must now be supposed to stand on their own merits. It may, however, be proper to state, that the present edition not only contains a great number of valuable pieces which had been before unavoidably omitted, but also a portion of original manuscript, part of which is woven into the memoir, and part inserted in the last volume."

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